This paper examines the operation of a pilot project in rural training conducted in South Australia in 1996-7, in which the author served as external evaluator. This program formed one of several Australian vocational training system pilot projects designed to test a new system of vocational education proposed in 1992 by the Employment and Skills Formation Council, in a report usually referred to as the Carmichael Report. That report argued for closer links between vocational education and real work, a substantial increase in skill level and better articulation between school and work. It also encouraged national approaches to education and training linked around national competency standards. In this formulation the work standard, identified and described by industry and codified in a nationally endorsed framework was regarded as crucial in deciding assessment and curriculum content.

In more recent times, though in a less clear manner, vocational education (including traineeships) has been expected to include achievement in so called Key Competencies, the latter being generic or second order competencies which, it is argued, allow workers to attack novel problems or deal with issues in the work place of the future.

The Agriculture and Horticulture traineeship pilot was conceived as a project designed to ensure that rural needs were not left out of the rapid changes taking place under the Australian Training Reform Agenda in the period 1993-96. In particular a need was identified to provide an opportunity for people not employed in the farming industry, including those who were unemployed, to acquire some basic skills, knowledge of the industry, and develop appropriate attitudes. It was envisaged that on completion of the traineeship twenty graduates of at least ASF level 2 standard would obtain employment and that some would move on to complete the higher level Certificate in Farm Practice.

The task of developing traineeships for farm work and horticulture pursuits was an ambitious project particularly given the subdued economic situation in rural Australia at the time, the geographic spread of the industry, the small size of the workforce at most sites, and particular difficulties in coordinating and accessing training eventually
contracted through several decentralised TAFE institutes. The project also had to contend with an undeveloped understanding in the rural community about traineeships generally and lack of an apprenticeship or traineeship culture.

The design of the program built on extensive knowledge gained from industry leaders and an earlier survey of training needs conducted by the South Australian Rural Industry Committee in 1992. That study examined the career paths and training needs for farm workers in South Australia and included extensive consultation with employers, employees, self-employed contractors and share farmers, the training agencies, the industry organisations and the unions.3

Trainees
The project commenced with a target of 30 trainees. It effectively enrolled over 70. This greatly increased number was due to the participation of four Aboriginal community programs (Arabunna, Bungala, Buttlingara and Nepabunna)4 which between them enrolled 52 trainees. These communities are structured as corporations and served as employer/trainer for Aboriginal clients.

As the pilot progressed it was not always clear who was in and who had dropped out. There were 85 ‘names’ in the cohort which spread over a 2 year period. The highest number at any one point was in the low 70s. These dwindled over the duration.5 In the project’s concluding weeks (February 1997) there were 41 ‘active’ trainees plus 10 who had completed. In terms of active participants for any substantial period of time it is reasonable to think of the project as comprising about 60 trainees. This is well in excess of the planned number. This led to greater expenditure than might have been anticipated in areas such as employer subsidies, employee support payments, wages and training costs.

Recruitment
Recruitment for traineeships was a double challenge. On the one hand suitable trainees needed to be selected and on the other, willing (and suitable) hosts had to be found to employ the trainees. Publicity and marketing of the program proceeded at two levels with most of the emphasis directed at farmers.

It was intended to enrol students who demonstrated at least Key Competency level 1 standard. The selection process set out to test potential trainees in terms of essential skills, knowledge and attitudes. In this regard it is interesting to note the emphasis put on attitudes. In the trainee interview protocol adopted by the project, it was intended applicants would be asked to complete a personal qualities checklist which listed 45

3 Careers and Training for Multi-Skilled Farm Workers, Agriculture and Horticulture Training Council of SA, November 1992
4 Arabunna is at Maree; Buttlingara, Whyalla; Bungala, Port Augusta; and Nepabunna near Leigh Creek. The Arabunna trainees were employed through Spencer Gulf Group Training Scheme.
5 A decision was made not to admit any further trainees to the pilot phase however demand has continued with continuing admissions to the post pilot component of agriculture and horticulture traineeships.
descriptors such as: dependable, accurate, tactful, well-organised (presumably desirable traits) and others perhaps not so desirable, racy, professional, assertive and daring. An indication of the type of person sought can be gleaned from the observation that they were also to be asked what organisations and clubs they belonged to and details of their hobbies and leisure interests.

Of particular interest, the selection protocol invited applicants to respond to scenarios which emphasised the attitude of putting the needs of the job ahead of personal considerations such as a planned weekend away or the rigours of hard work and long hours. This sits comfortably with the review document which led to the establishment of the traineeship which observed, “The training program should place as much emphasis on attitudes as it does on skills.”

There are several observations which can be made about the above selection protocols. They were used in the earlier stages and valuable though they may have been, they were not enforced for the majority of trainees. One can appreciate the project manager’s desire (and that of the industry at large) to enrol more and more trainees. In the enthusiasm for more trainees, selection process seemed to move out of the control of the project manager. Also it is important to note that from an industry perspective there were practical difficulties in screening out applicants if an employer wished to take them on. Indeed the project demonstrated that it is very difficult for any central authority to exercise judgement over who is a suitable applicant either as a trainee or a host employer/on-job trainer. There were also difficulties in co-ordinating the activities of such a widely dispersed group of trainees, employer/trainers and instructors. However if traineeships of this type are to be successful in the longer term it would seem desirable for some mechanism must be found to ensure the appropriate selection and screening of both parties and monitoring of trainee progress.

Trainee’s Ages
The pilot commenced in 1995 with the first trainees beginning mid-year. Further trainees were admitted over the ensuing 9 months and most finished by the end of March 1997. An age analysis conducted in March 1996 provides a reasonable representation for the project as a whole. At that time there were 57 trainees active in the pilot. The youngest was 16 and the oldest was 49. The mean age was 24 years. This is a very old group to be doing entry level training, as least in the terms envisaged by Carmichael. The age spread can be seen from the following table.

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6 Careers and Training for Multi-Skilled Farm Workers, November 1992, A&HTC of SA.
Table 1 Trainees’ Age Spread March 1996

<table>
<thead>
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<td>16-18</td>
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<td>19-21</td>
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<td>31-33</td>
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<td>37-39</td>
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<td>40-42</td>
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</table>

It is important to note that less than one third was in the 16-19 age group, the range normally targeted for entry level training. The vast majority had left school several years earlier. The trainees were recruited without building close links with schools. Indeed integration of the traineeship with secondary education in a seamless fashion which might facilitate progression directly from school to the traineeship seems not to have been the pattern here.

The success of the project was influenced by a cohort of participants with varying levels of commitment. There was a core group of trainees intent on furthering their education and training with a view to making a career in farming and a secondary population which for various reasons seemed less focussed. About two thirds of the trainee cohort were employed by companies associated with Aboriginal community development projects. For many of these, the traineeship was just the next in a series of training programs and work creation schemes. Several trainees had been on CDEP programs\(^7\) (2 days per week work around the community) and returned to them when the traineeship ended. Only a few in the Aboriginal group had expectations of real employment on farms. Others were looking for the next scheme or at best employment in some other field. Valuable those these training activities may have been for certain individuals, they accommodated a set of expectations and learning experiences which seemed quite different to the small business productivity ethic which surrounds commercially driven farms.

Outside the Aboriginal corporations there were about 20 farmers with whom trainees were placed. This cohort tended to be younger and in most instances had a farming background but only two or three moved directly from school to the traineeship.

\(^7\) Community Development Employment Programs are ATSIC funded programs operating in several Aboriginal communities.
Typically most had done some seasonal or casual work on farms and were looking for employment in this field. For them the traineeship was a crucial step in that it provided financial assistance in terms of subsidised wages and created the opportunity for the farmer to take on an extra hand which otherwise would have been beyond reach.

Prior Experience of Trainees
Trainees were questioned as to their previous employment and training experience. Some indication of work and post school experience can be seen from Table 2.

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<td>Trainees' Prior Experience in Work or Post School Training n=38</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
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10%  47%  29%  13%

It is not surprising given the age range to find that most had been in employment prior to embarking on the traineeship. Often this involved some form of training and was linked with schemes such as LEAP, CDEP, Job Search, and New Work Opportunity Scheme. Several had spent long periods on unemployment benefit. About a quarter had two or more years experience on farms or in closely related pursuits, eg contract shearing or fencing, but generally they had not prospered and were in and out of work doing bouts of fruit picking, casual work and a succession of labour market training and development programs. A few had worked on family farms.

Over the entire traineeship, school to work transition did not proceed as might have been expected. Candidates who might have been recruited directly from school would seem to have been displaced by older more experienced workers and those being assisted by CES and other placement and training agencies.

Pathways
The experience from this pilot demonstrates that the majority of those who accessed traineeships did so well after having left school and often at the behest of an employer.
who decided to take on a trainee and then approached someone known to them (or already in their employ) and provided guidance into a traineeship\textsuperscript{8}. It was not uncommon to find family relationships between the employer/trainer and the trainee\textsuperscript{9}. This ‘tap on the shoulder’ approach to trainee recruiting appeared to be widespread. Perhaps that is how it has always been in rural communities, however it should be noted that this selection practice is incompatible with modern developments in human resource management in that it puts to one side consideration of equity and selection on merit. In these circumstances it is more than usually difficult to include some balance of minority or non-traditional groups in traineeships.

This effect worked in several directions. The Aboriginal companies were prevented by their charter and policies from employing non-Aboriginal trainees. In both groups women were significantly under-represented. There were for example only three women trainees in a field where there is increasing recognition of the important role women play. One was in the horticulture stream and another only partially completed due to illness\textsuperscript{10}.

The large number of Aboriginal people in this traineeship (70\%) should not be regarded as reflective of the industry but rather as an outcome of particular Aboriginal communities identifying the opportunity to generate subsidy income while at the same time providing training and income support for their members.

**Trainee Outcomes**

At time of completion of the pilot a total of 85 trainees had enrolled and 47 had completed ASF 2 level. Allowing for uncertainties as to whether some people were actually enrolled trainees or not it is clear there was a high non-completion rate. It seems 38 people who commenced did not finish and there is a question mark about several others\textsuperscript{11}. While this may not have been at much cost to the project it does represent a sizeable financial contribution by government to employers in terms of subsidies, let alone wasted motivation and effort by trainers and trainees. This observation reinforces the need for careful selection. Ability to see the indenture to its completion seems an important attribute for which to select. Likewise, selection of suitable employer/trainers who are able to create the conditions which encourage trainees to complete their training is important.

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\textsuperscript{8} This finding is similar to that of several other AVTS pilots in South Australia. See Reynolds, R. 1996, *Vocational Education or Income Maintenance?* in Learning and Work, International Conference on Post-Compulsory Education and Training, Griffith University, Brisbane.

\textsuperscript{9} Fathers engage sons as trainees on the family farm. Whether this is a sufficient arms length relationship for assessment and certification is examined later in the paper.

\textsuperscript{10} This provides an interesting example of non-traditional participation in that both mother and son were enrolled with the same employer in the same entry level traineeship.

\textsuperscript{11} It is possible to be on the traineeship in terms of wages and subsidies while at the same time making slow progress with regard to completing training modules. Monitoring of progress over large distances in outback communities creates a particular challenge.
The granting of employer/trainer status seems to have been hasty in this project. One employer ceased operation of his business a few months into the project leaving 6 trainees with virtually no opportunity to complete. Another failed to obtain promised access to a farming property for the full duration of the training and another held a property so distant from the main training centre that on-farm work was punctuated by long periods of community based work. In several instances the quality of farm management could be called into question and many trainees were exposed to work experiences which would most likely fall far short of ‘best practice’. The author is not an expert in farming practice however one could not help but be struck by the seemingly wide range of abilities at least as judged by interviews of farmers and a general impression of the farm. Some were obviously successful while others seemed on the brink of bankruptcy.

In the Aboriginal programs the host/trainers were not usually successful farmers but rather supervisors of community employment programs. Farms on which these trainees were intended to practise were described in terms which hardly bespoke of good animal husbandry or successful management. It is not unreasonable to expect that an employer who takes on a trainee (and in some instances several trainees at the same time) should be in a position to provide model examples of sound farming.

There seemed to be no effective process of assessing the skills, knowledge and standards of the host employer/trainer. In several instances employers seemed more motivated by the availability of subsidies than in training skilled workers for their industry. This is a matter for some concern and an area in which the industry should be encouraged take a lead.

On the other hand, a related objective in this pilot was to establish a nucleus of trainers in farming who would assist in raising skill levels throughout the industry. The program provided a series of orientation and training programs for host employers and trainers. These were of two days duration and attracted 44 participants. Most host employers attended and reported on the experience in quite positive terms. Confronting the task of training a new employee and surveying the course content, served to reminded most of how much skill was involved in the practical work of farming. In a few instances farmers realised they too could profit from the learning material. For many this was their first exposure to issues surrounding the notion of competency and competency standards, assessment and training methods. The experience of supervising a trainee was a further learning experience and deliberating over whether a particular trainee had achieved a certain level of competence, in itself, served to enhance knowledge and skill in this area.

**Accelerated progress and recognition of prior learning (RPL)**
One might have expected, given the extensive farming experience of several trainees that they would complete the traineeship in a shorter time period yet there appeared to be little evidence of varying training time either on or off the job, commensurate with
the wide variation in ability in this group\textsuperscript{12}. The pilot was successful in establishing at least to some degree, processes for RPL however in practice little use was made of this provision. This finding has been echoed in other AVTS pilots and is seems there is an incomplete understanding of the forces which drive RPL in traineeships and the desire or otherwise to use such opportunities. Even where provision is made many trainees prefer to ‘repeat the lesson’ rather than press for an early assessment. The notion that education and training require some set time, reflects a tradition which seems difficult to change. On the other hand, given poor employment prospects, many trainees were loathe to finish early. At least the traineeship provided a steady occupation and income.

**Key Competencies**

The inclusion of Key Competencies in this traineeship (and indeed in many others) is highly problematic. The issue arises from the release of two reports, the Carmichael Report in 1992 and the Mayer Report some six months later. Both reports emphasised the need to develop competencies in workers but it is not at all clear that the term competency was used in the same way in each report. The use adopted by Carmichael, ie Vocational Competencies has until recently, been dominant. This use describes competencies as segments of performance at work, drawing on abilities which can be trained.\textsuperscript{13} These abilities can be assessed in relatively fine grain with a degree of reliability and demonstrably are very closely linked with existing job descriptions.\textsuperscript{14} They are determined by a process of job analysis and approved through a tripartite committee process, national competency standards bodies (CSBs) and finally endorsement by the National Training Board.\textsuperscript{15} In many callings they were given added industrial weight by their inclusion in awards. For training curricula to be approved by accreditation authorities it must be shown that the content addresses the above vocational competencies.

However a second layer has been added by the desire to ensure that training, particularly for entry level workers includes another set of competencies known as the Key Competencies. These derive from the Mayer report. The necessity for their inclusion in a legalistic sense flows from a decision by the various State and Commonwealth Ministers for Vocational Education and Training that Key Competencies be adopted as part of a national agenda.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{12} It should be noted however that the overall training period has been lengthened in the case of interruption due to family exigencies for one trainee and target achievement lowered from ASF 2 to ASF 1 in the case of at least one other trainee. In both instances the project has demonstrated commendable flexibility but this is not the same as RPL.

\textsuperscript{13} Interestingly for AVC projects, attitudes are excluded from the notion of competency. See definitions in the base training agreements with the Commonwealth.

\textsuperscript{14} Or in many industries, the equivalent of job descriptions set out in awards.

\textsuperscript{15} This body has been reconstituted as the Standards and Curriculum Council

\textsuperscript{16} The case for inclusion of key competencies rests on more than a Ministerial decree. The Mayer Committee proponents would suggest that their competencies are what industry really wants and needs.
Key Competencies are abilities which have general applicability across all existing jobs and it is argued will be those needed in jobs of the future as new forms and structures of work emerge. There is an analogy here between the idea of content and process. The Vocational Competencies are the content - the things which have to be known for a specific job, while the Key Competencies are more to do with the way one approaches a new situation and the processes one employs in doing so. For example a vocational competencies would be met by being trained to do a specific task now, such as pruning a vine. A Key Competency would be knowing how to deduce a solution to a novel problem which neither the trainer nor trainee had encountered, for example dealing with an unknown plant disease.

Key Competencies, though they may have been learned in one setting, are supposed to be applicable in all other settings. This generalised ability is intended to take effect not only across all jobs but into ordinary life. Hence, Key Competencies are intended to serve the trainee in such fields as recreation, family life, interpersonal relationships and citizenship. What is being emphasised here is something which overlaps to a considerable degree with general education. The challenge for industry is that traineeships are supposed to provide this general education, including personal and cognitive development.

Key Competencies comprise eight fields of knowledge and are described at three levels. These roughly equate with ASF levels 1-3. They are very similar to Level D Statements and Profiles being introduced in schools and equate approximately to years 11, 12 and possibly a year 13 in Australian secondary schools. It can be argued that whatever assessment protocols are adopted for traineeships they should provide for coverage of another 24 assessment hurdles designed to ensure achievement of the eight Key Competencies at levels 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

This project clearly recognised the need to include the Key Competencies. It required as part of the planned selection criteria, that trainees would be able to demonstrate at least level one Key Competencies. One might expect therefore that on entry, trainees would have made some progress in terms of achieving the Key Competencies and that they would have advanced to a higher level during the course of the traineeship but this is difficult to demonstrate.

The curriculum prepared for the traineeship does reflect an attempt to include training in the Key Competencies. A matrix was prepared which suggested that “the majority of the modules included in the course address one or more of the Key Competencies and their transfer into the workplace.” This is commendable though it leaves open the question as to whether it is sufficient. The ‘trainee profile’ questionnaire used in assessing potential entrants, at least in terms of literacy and numeracy may have been useful but the planned selection process was barely used beyond the first intake and

17 There is a lively discussion in the literature at whether there should be seven or eight.
there was little attempt to teach or assess the range of Key Competencies in subsequent work.

Having interviewed most of the trainees in this project it would seem highly unlikely that many of them would be able to demonstrate level two or three standard in the Key Competencies\(^{19}\). The issue here is much larger than any particular traineeship but in testing the new AVT system proposed by Carmichael and pursued by DEETYA, this question cries out for an answer. The resolution probably depends on being able to assess the Key Competencies more explicitly. In the meantime traineeships and training providers are clearly struggling to meet two sets of expectations - to train entry level workers in specific Vocational Competencies and in Key Competencies, without assurance that the two do in fact sit neatly together and in the absence of an understanding how the latter could be assessed.

It was clear in this study that trainees and on farm employer/trainers had virtually no understanding of the Key Competencies and even within the TAFE sector instructors had very little appreciation of what the VET system was seeking in this regard. The evidence from this pilot would suggest that lip-service is being paid to the Key Competencies by the inclusion of a matrix or table in the curriculum documents and an assurance that the matter is in hand.

**Assessment**

Assessment in this project can be considered in two parts. Material taught at TAFE was assessed by the instructors and the remainder was assessed on farm by the host employer/trainer. If TAFE did not complete the assessment there was an expectation that the employer/trainer would assess this component on the farm. Several farmers expressed a reluctance to assess material taught off the farm. There were several reasons for this. Some farmers do not feel they have the skills or the time, or lack the equipment to assess what has been taught in TAFE.

This reluctance challenges one of the central features of a competency standards based approach to training. The standards development process begins from the assumption that what is to be taught is 'the way it is done on the job', that is, train the neophyte up to the industry standard. To use an analogy the task of training is to bring the apprentice up to the standards of the master. In this construction the 'master' never has any doubt about his or her competence yet in this study it was apparent that several farmers or supervisors doubted their own ability. For example one farmer suggested that he didn't know anything about fertilisers because he didn't use them. Another suggested he hoped to learn from the traineeship material how to improve his record keeping. Several indicated a desire for more information about what was being taught at TAFE and in the absence of having studied such material felt unable to assess it.

\(^{19}\) Performance at this level is similar to what one would expect at year 12 or year 13.
It appears that several of the employers in this group did not regard themselves as ‘masters’ of the standards they were endeavouring to assess. The danger here is that unless the trainee is placed with a skilled farmer it is a case of ‘the blind leading the blind’. Perhaps only those farmers who have successfully completed a higher level certificate such as the Certificate in Farm Practice or can demonstrate competency at ASF level 3 or 4, should be approved as employer/trainers. Alternatively the industry might be able to assess the suitability of farmers on the basis of their demonstrated knowledge or reputation. Another test more geared to commercial forces and the market might be to ensure that only those farms which are financially successful are approved for training purposes. This might discourage those who see the traineeship and related subsidies as the only form of labour the property can sustain.

It is clear that assessment is a key component to a successful program yet it was the area where much more work was needed. Valid assessment depends upon the assessor having appropriate content knowledge, appropriate assessor skill, sufficient motivation to do the task thoroughly, opportunity in terms of time and facilities, together with the ability to be objective and totally free from conflict of interest. Frequently it seems the ‘signing off’ process took place late in the traineeship and in a bit of a rush. Some system whereby assessment is made progressively with appropriate recording in a co-ordinated data base seems essential. The alternative is a flurry of log book activity in the final weeks. There is a high probability that in these circumstances corners will be cut in a situation where there is not time to do the rework that in less pressured times might be required.

As indicated above some employer/trainer/assessors did not believe they had appropriate content knowledge, several clearly had lost motivation and some question must be raised about the sufficiency of a two day orientation and training program. In several instances employer/trainers did not have access to appropriate farming sites and confessed their lack of experience in assessing. They would have been helped had there been a roving supervising assessor or moderator to assist in maintaining standards across the field.

Perhaps more disturbing is the problem of conflict of interest. In the first place assessment was carried out by the trainer. Most teachers know the danger of bias in regard to their own pupils. Assessing the trainee is to some extent an assessment of the training. As one farmer put it ‘if someone came to me looking for a job and had all those modules signed off I’d like to know who had done the assessing and I would probably re-assess anyway.’

There is further subtle pressure to ‘sign off’ a trainee. In several instances fathers took on their sons or other relatives as trainees. Objectivity in these circumstances is difficult to maintain. In the Aboriginal group trainer/assessors referred to the

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20 There is also an issue about aligning TAFE based assessment with on farm assessment. Rather than the competent, not competent system used on farm, apparently some TAFE instructors have inserted another category. This variation emerged late in the review and further examination seems warranted.
difficulty in ‘failing’ a more senior person or someone who was related. In some instances the pressure to ‘pass’ the trainee was likely to be exacerbated by the income subsidy which was dependent on successful completion.\textsuperscript{21} The whole issue of designing an objective assessment system with appropriate moderation and quality assurance, it is suggested, is an important matter for further development. The importance of valid and reliable certification is central to the whole training reform agenda and if employers adopt the view that they must re-assess before hiring, the advantages of a nationally consistent training system are considerably eroded.

This pilot was most unusual in another respect in that it involved employers with multiple trainees, particularly in the Aboriginal group. These arrangements should not be confused with group training schemes. In the multiple trainee model demonstrated here up to twenty trainees were engaged by the one employer to work more or less as a single group. Significantly these trainees constituted the main work force at the site. There were few if any other co-workers engaged in farming and only a handful of on-job supervisors. Whereas in the apprenticeship or more usual traineeship arrangements there would be a majority of skilled workers able to serve as models for good work practices, in these programs trainees outnumbered regular workers or supervisors by as much as ten to one. This seems a very unsatisfactory arrangement. Again this would seem to be an instance where the industry could intervene. It is suggested that no employer should be able to take on more trainees than regular workers and that each trainee should be attached to a nominated on-job trainer who has demonstrated skills in farming.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Summary}

This project substantially met its objectives. Over 40 trainees completed the traineeship using competency based material and about 20 found full-time employment. However there have been many who have not survived the traineeship course. From over 80 ‘starters’ about half have ‘seen the distance’.

There were several unexpected outcomes. The traineeship has not operated in a way which facilitated a seamless transition from school to work. It has not continued the general education implicit in the notion of Key Competencies. Rather the anticipated school leavers have been displaced by a much older group emerging from a range of income support and training programs.

Selection protocols were well developed but these were by-passed in the press to enrol more and more trainees. The motivation for taking on extra trainees seems driven to some extent by employers’ desire for subsidy support. Ability to manage these pressures in future seems crucial for success. The program is in danger of being converted from a training exercise to one of income maintenance.

\textsuperscript{21} This is a particular problem when multiple trainees are placed with the same employer resulting in many thousands of dollars being contingent on the simple initialling of a log book.

\textsuperscript{22} Or Horticulture if this is the selected stream.
The quality of training was mixed, particularly on-the-job training. This seems due to a lack of competence (and confidence) apparent at several sites and the enrolment of multiple trainees by some employers, the quality of which in terms of best practice in agriculture and horticulture leaves much to be desired.

Assessment appears to be the key to success in decentralised traineeships such as this. In this instance much of the assessment occurred late in the project and in circumstances where assessors felt unsure of themselves. Despite the training provided in assessment there is more which needs to be done. There is a need for some system of coordinated moderation of assessment practices and a much tighter approval process in establishing appropriate 'on-job' sites.

Despite these unexpected outcomes, participants express good levels of satisfaction with their involvement and most employers indicated they would take on another trainee. Trainees in the main were content with the result, several have obtained jobs which otherwise would not have become available.

The agriculture and horticulture industry has demonstrated that traineeships should not be the sole province of industrial and city based vocations. The way has been paved for the further development of modern apprenticeship and training schemes for these rural pursuits.

Bibliography


