

## 2004 Australian National Plumbing Forum

This series of reports summarise the papers presented to the 2004 Australian National Plumbing Forum held 3 to 4 September 2004 at the Sheraton Perth Hotel, Perth Western Australia and also provide conclusions reached by the attending Plumbing Professionals from Australia and the World. The Forum was hosted by the Institute of Plumbing Australia Incorporated.

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Saturday 4 September 2004 – National Training Packages

### Mr Graeme Perry PIC and Australian National Training Authority

Thank you for putting up with me this morning and National Competencies for Licensing. We have heard about this for how many years – many, many years. National Competencies – first a little bit of history. National Competencies for plumbing were commenced and discussions were commenced at 1988-1989 by ANTA. They were Industry based competencies and Construction Training Australia were involved in all of these competencies. Development of the competencies commenced in 1990. We as plumbers were the first ones to start on National Competencies. 1994 ANTA adopted and started National Competencies for overseas candidates and back door entries. The contents of the competencies were far too broad, estimated training hours that we saw at that stage were 75% to 80% more, when hours were about 850 hours they would have blown out to about 1600 hours, and that was just estimated. They were broad, they were big, they were ambiguous - trainers at this stage were not consulted and the regulatory authorities were not consulted, and that was nationally and in each State.

Competencies in 1994 to 2000 - competencies were changed, altered and done with no signing off at any stage. Non-endorsed components, i.e. the teaching notes, were developed by various people and a large sum of money spent. Some of the content of these components will be able to be used in the future but all competencies have been reformatted or had to be reformatted, because they just didn't suit plumbing. In November 2002 ANTA engaged BCA Training and Developments services, of BCA and Development Services Pty Ltd, to work with ANTA to develop new competencies. All building-construction plumbing competencies have been rewritten and reformatted. New competency numbers have been allocated and the numbers which you see up there - the BCP as a building construction plumbing common as CM - the number to be sited as an AQF level two, Australian Qualifications Framework 2 - or if you look over the next one as BCP Building Construction Plumbing RF is roofing number 3 is AQF level 3. At the end of it is has got a B or A beside it whether it has been revised or not revised and things like that. We will cover a bit more of that as we go through. All scopes of work have been revamped, the critical aspects have been redeveloped into more specific terms and this resulted in the competencies being streamlined and incorporated into other competencies. In some areas there were about three or four competencies and when you really looked at them, they could come down into one competency that covers the whole lot of them.

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This resulted into reduced training time and I will cover reduced training times later. The training package for AQF level 3 was approved by Anta in November 2003. Now when I say ANTA - it is our National Training Authority, and ANZRA is the regulators Australian and New Zealand Reciprocity Association. Once these competencies were developed we then had to look at it and the regulators looked at what is included in each TAFE and we went round and had a look. Each state: Western Australia water supply, sanitary drainage and gasfitting Northern Territory water supply sanitary and drainage; South Australia water supply sanitary drainage; and gasfitting Queensland the same; New South Wales has got an extra one, it has got roofing. Victoria has got the six with mechanical services. Tasmania, again has got the six - and the ACT.

So when we look across all the areas, what are the common four areas - water supply, sanitary, drainage and gas fitting. I'll come back to some of these later. The common core competencies in each area and competencies for each registration and what ANZRA has done at this stage. There was a qualifications framework or implementation guide, which has been sent down to the states. The regulators have looked at that implementation guide and have gone through it, and put into each area what they considered fits into their scope of registration. The common core competencies, which there are quite a few - which covers: introductory skills; it covers the hand skill; it covers the general introductory area of plumbing; and some of the common areas of training.

In Victoria hours, Victoria gets 1054 hours of training. They will not be able to do the whole six areas because it is thrown out with mechanical services. Australia throws it way over the top and they are looking about somewhere about the 1054 hours. So each state and territory has to look at how they go into scope - what they really need, and what's in it for them. And I have just done some scooping here - the common water sanitary gas and drainage - and if you have a look at all the areas and in the implementation guide, water supply is common to every area and as a minimum AQF level 3 qualification - the committee voted that you have a minimum of four areas to get AQF level 3. Depending on each state and territory - and it will depend entirely on what hours are funded and what you select for common core and electives, as how each state will do it - they will all be different, but at least each state will be doing the same competencies, the numbers will be the same, and if they travel from one state to another state, they will be able to be transportable because they would have been ticked off at one state. The same common number and people will be able to transfer and again if you look at all six number four, there not too many will do that, but if they want to work in all those areas, they can. Most states as I said earlier are: Water Supply, Sanitary, Drainage and maybe Gas Fitting - they might then, if Roofing is not regulated, they might pick some electives in Roofing.

License levels for plumbers AQF level 4. AQF Australian Qualifications Level 4. Framework level 4 cooperation again from ANTA and ANZRA. Once the AQF level 3 qualifications were done, they were done in under 12 months, after taking from 1988-2002 with the VCA Consultants cooperation, with the Regulators' trainers and the Industry - we had the competencies for AQF level 3 or registration level over the line within 12 months. So ANZRA then asked ANTA could they help us because we wanted AQF level 4 competencies for licensing. The cooperation was done, we sat down, it was the same Committee that met the same ANZRA committee, and we developed AQF level 4 competencies. These competencies have been developed and signed off - I believe in the last two or three weeks - by all states and territories. The common licensing at AQF level 4 area, the common areas are: Carry out work based risk control processes, estimate and cost and establish, business and legal requirements.

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The Industry has told the Regulators, that is what they need for people who sign off work, who are the employers, who will be responsible for work - they want those competencies done. We then go into each area - Water Supply. Plan, Size and Layout, Hot and Cold Water Services - remembering they do those first three - they then go into Plan, Size and Layout, Hot and Cold Water Services. That is the minimum for a licensed area for water supply.

Specialized area or electives. In water supply the base ones at this stage are Backflow, Thermostat and Mixing Valves and Residential Domestic Fire Services. That's Residential Domestic Fire Sprinklers, sorry. Some states will require Backflow as their licensed area. Some states don't want it some states will want Thermostatic Mixing Valve. As I said earlier the Plan, Size and Layout as the base, these electives can be added in, taken out if they go to, somebody transfers to a state where they want it and they haven't done it. They would have to go retraining and be assessed in the Backflow area. Again those three common ones we go into Gas Fitting, Plan, Size and Layout gas installations. What ANZRA put up was for the electives, type A Appliance Servicing, type B Restricted and Advance, and type A Conversion. This was not accepted by the Industry or by the Gas Regulators they said they would accept the type A Appliance Servicing to be a specialized area or an elective, but they do not want the type B ones - they at this stage have not been put on the list and they are not in this recommendations being approved by ANTA, that will be done in twelve months.

Again carry out risk control processors for those three areas, drainage, the commons plans size and layout and drainage systems, plan size and layout storm water drainage systems and design domestic treatment plant and disposal systems. Included in that bottom one as we see what has happened in the last few days here was grey water, recycled water that would be included in that bottom one, training would be in there.

Possible combinations. Now these are only my ideas, common areas and this is going to depend entirely on states implementation people trainers, teachers the whole bit. Common areas for registration most of water supply drain gas and maybe roofing or then they can do the common core areas as I said here, those legal requirements, the business management, the estimating and quoting, and then they will get into the plan size design and layout of the separate areas as we go. This is one I had of thought on roofing if the people wanted roofing minimum four areas with your common. The roofing people might want electives in scaffolding elevated platform operating hoists or load slinging, the flexibilities are there for the individual contractor to guide his apprentice or his trainee through, then they can onto licenses and then to the other area.

Possible combinations. This competency area is flexible on a scope of XXXX Again the ANZRA people and the regulators asked for once AQF level 3 is done, and 4, could we come up or add assistance with a National Assessment. In Victoria National, National Assessments were designed for consistency across all states and territories they cater for overseas candidates partially qualified plumbers, overseas persons requiring assessments and they go again into what we call the CORGI, and I will just mention the CORGI one. A lot of people are coming over from CORGI and they are partly qualified in gas fitting, they don't know our standards, our regulations, our SI units, all those things are different. So they come into the partly qualified area and in a CORGI gas fitter over in the UK you've got a person who will have a basic pipe work, you have been doing it for 30 years, why retraining? But he usually has only got separate areas maybe water boilers and you can tell that, on the back of his

CORGI card. So you assess him in the areas that he hasn't been assessed in and remembering people from over in the U.K. doing gas fitting, have to be assessed every three years, and it costs them in the vicinity of - when I was over there - approximately \$1250 per assessment. So we are looking at quite a bit of money to be reassessed and retrained.

Are there any questions at this stage?

Plan and layout. In the competencies for those they are as common the Industry agreed up to about 5 stories. Consultants come in above that.

Q. Is a restricted electrical license included with other units or is it going to be an elective?

A. Restricted electrical license - our regulators don't cover any electrical qualification at all but the restricted electrical license comes up with the servicing of gas appliances and that is covered in that whole core of that setup. O.H.&S. electrical and all that is covered in those base common areas that are done early on.

Q. I noticed on the overhead you had over there storm water is part of the drainage. Is that a suggestion that storm water is going to become regulated.

A. It is in some states.

Q. I know it is in some states but in WA it is not at the moment.

A. No as I said it is in some states, some states will pick it up some states won't pick it up.

Q. But even though it is listed on licensing, it's an optional license subject rather than a National Competency License.

A. Yes as some states will pick it up as I said and some states won't when people transportable in state to state if they haven't got those numbers or those competencies there they might have to pick that one up.

Q. But with so much flexibility it is not really a National Standard is it?

A. Well I believe it is. All our states are different. You have got Nat common, Common and National Competencies there that every training provider in the country will be teaching the same competencies.

Q. I would have thought as a Nation if we are going for National Competencies and National standards then we all follow one guideline, one training package. And I know that each state has different expectations, however surely we should be working towards precisely what the word is National standards or National competencies.

A. Well if all regulators right across the country regulated every area of plumbing you can do that but it will be a National training.

Q. But that is not so much an industry problem it is more a regulator problem or industry working with the regulators.

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A. Industry working with the regulators. As far as I believe this is a lot of electives are there, there is a lot of flexibility for the employer to develop his employee into specific areas and expertise that he can, that he wants.

Just then I will just go on a little bit with the National Plumbers Training Advisory Committee, that is a group of teachers that have been meeting regularly, they have had two meetings. They are assisting now in writing the unendorsed component or the teaching notes across Australia there is a representative from each state and territory that meets on that committee they are a very enthusiastic group and if you have got any concerns with that group or input or training or anything like that I strongly advise you go to them and their Max is the person in Western Australia and there is a person right in every State and Territory who is a contact person. As I say training I believe will come together a lot closer with the liaison and discussion and communication. And they are working very well.

Yes for sure, and is there anyone, Graeme are you involved in that sort of level of training, that type of training, diploma type training?

Plumbing Diploma is something that the Western Australian Chapter of the Institute have been working very hard to reintroduce into Western Australia. And this is driven around Australia by the introduction of the Plumbing Code of Australia which will require that designs are certified and that requirement then spreads on to the fact that the consultant certifying it has to have some sort of qualification other than just being someone that hung up the shingle as a plumbing consultant, so that has been driving it in WA and they have done a lot of work on it so I will just open up and see if Graeme can answer some of the questions.

The only area that has been developed at AQF level 4 is for licensed areas. The Diploma in hydraulics and all of that have yet to be developed and it is up to Industry to really put pressure on ANTA to say - listen we want this qualification. Plumbing must develop through all the AQF levels. Must go to diploma, it must go above it. It is an Industry and probably this forum should be pushing that pretty hard. At this stage no it has not even been discussed.

I, from WA I'd be saying no. I'd say start pushing, start writing into ANTA and say look we want these things developed. We want to move on. If you are going to sit back it is not going to happen. You must push your own Industry and really develop those things.

Q. [inaudible]

Yes but it would have to come and be endorsed Nationally that could come into AQF level 4 or above depends where it fits.

Q. [Inaudible]

It would all have to come together and be brought together.

Q. [Inaudible]

That's right at every State and Territory it would have to have input to make it something worthwhile for the Industry.

Q. [inaudible] training. Unless he is going to get some reward at the end. And Graeme would you like to make a comment, I just can't see where this diploma

person is going to fit in the Plumbing Industry when he is running up against an engineering qualification coming down from the University.

So this is the problem the Industry has got. You can lift up your base training to very high levels but once you start to get into the paraprofessional area you are starting to come against other pressures that are out there. You don't have to be a licensed plumber to do this sort of work. What you are talking about is design work.

Well you may want to do that but at the moment the Industry, the Plumbing Industry Nationally is not supporting that. Those in NSW - there certainly is the Associate to Plumber course, and those people do two benefits one, even within the trade and within their own construction zones and work the experience and better training in the Associate Diploma is certainly worthwhile for those people and also most of the hydraulics service consultants in NSW go through that Associate Diploma. You will find that most employers or Hydraulic Service Consultants ask for people that have had that out of the trade because they find them the most suitable designers.

Yes but what you are moving into is a very narrow stream of plumbing. So you have all this effort going in to really a, from a broad base, to a very clinical narrow section of plumbing.

I don't agree I think that really the hydraulic service consultants covers all those components that we have talked about within the plumbing work plus fire services plus extending storm water detentions and I don't quite agree with the fact that it becomes narrow. And it is certainly I would put it down as a designer it is a wider base than most journeyman or a lot of contractors.

Yes that is fine and that's been there and you do get those people coming up through that track now but the Industry through incentives and pay levels and all those sort of carrots that are held out there for a person to pursue that line has never really supported that.

Well that is what I am suggesting that the Industry doesn't support that at the moment.

Could I just say that one of the things that we need to look at Gary XXXX from MPA skills here is that there are multiple career paths above the licensed plumber level. Many people go into plumbing management I mean most plumbers end up in managing a group of people that is one pathway. The plumbing consultant is another pathway potentially plumbing teaching is another pathway and plumbing regulation is another pathway into the regulators compliance offices I think it seems to me that all of these career pathways are things that the Industry has not really thought about the Industry has tended to think about training as being limited to apprenticeship training and by and large maybe a little bit of post trade stuff after that but I think there are multiple pathways in this and the plumbing consultant is one of those options it is not the only option out there and in the big picture in producing things like level 4 level 5 qualifications we need to be allowing for all of those options.

Q. What they see is that their requirements have a pathway in that design consultant as with the cert 4 level that is coming on board now there is a whole range of competencies available with elements and performance criteria that dictate what the student or the learner shall do. Maybe we need to be told about what that niche Industry needs so we can design a package to meet your requirements.

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If I can go back on a bit of history within TAFE we were told a number of years ago by our leaders that we were not to spend time on presenting the underpinning knowledge to students, get them out the yard get them out on the work, in the workshop and teach them how to put things together. Now not long ago I sent a letter through to every country, well were not saying I, I initiated it the manager sent a letter to every country employer warning of the loss or of the baby boomer generation. Within 5 years most of you gents or many of you gents here will be hanging up your boots including myself and there will be that vacuum of knowledge gone. What Tim is saying earlier is we need more courses to replace ourselves the consultants the plumbing foremen supervisors all of that extra knowledge that myself and all of the other guys from my generation we did our plumbing license, we then went on and did our plumbing certificate then the plumbing diploma. Today we do not have those lads coming through at all. At Leederville College Gordon Hoare myself and the others, we used to blackmail the students to come in at night to do that certificate. They complained initially but once we got them in away they went. And the Industry has seen the benefit of this over the years but unless you pick this up again somehow turn it around to a positive we are going to see more of the SARS, more of incorrect workmanship we can put on an army of inspectors but hey the outcomes were disastrous. If there is another issue we are only three hours flying time from Bali we can bring in the virus just overnight we are five hours from Singapore what 7 hours from Bangkok if you look at it that way. Viruses will come in here that we have never had any immunity to and wipe large populations out. The system has been running very well for years but the governments or government within Australia has said hey don't teach those kids the underpinning knowledge. And there is that many out there that do not have the understanding that you have that you have within the trade you all assume that these kids do, they don't. We as lecturers in TAFE pushing our Masters we have got Max running around banging his head against a brick wall but hey we need that support too to get it going again. Or through MPA skills. Whatever direction you would like to do it, it must re-ignited and run again.

Just on underpinning knowledge in all the competencies underpinning knowledge is a major area and in the assessments guide at the end of it underpinning knowledge on every competency must be assessed. Has the participant have the knowledge of and there is a great list in every competency. So underpinning knowledge is a very big area. But just what you brought up there about training and teacher training probably and diplomas and things like that what I have been around to quite a few training facilities and that and states recently what is the average age of our training teachers around the country?

They are in the high 50's. What are we doing about training quality people from the Industry to go in and do our training? Unless we start doing this and start doing it now urgently it is not going to happen and where is our standards, where are they going to be?

Well if training going to be our future what is this forum going to do about it?

TAFE and other training centers obviously there is not a need for as many teachers because the numbers are not there going through the TAFE Institutions or training centers.

Well as I see it they are not putting on permanent trade teachers. In most states they are putting on sessional teachers. People that are retired out of the workforce come in teach certain areas go home no body to develop it no programme development. The permanent teacher that gets in there he does his programme he develops his

programme because he sees a future, the guy that comes in for a couple of hours or a day a week goes in teaches and walks out. I think, and this is generally I know across the Eastern States and especially Victoria what's happening.

Could I just talk a little about the part time trainers and I actually think we need a mix between the two between trainers who are in for a reasonable period of time in the training system and part time trainers. Industry always talk about the need for the training to be relevant to the knowledge that is out there in the workplace at the moment there is always a complaint about teachers or training teachers who are 10 years out of the Industry or whatever, part time teachers are a way for us in training organizations to keep up to date and be relevant to what is happening in practice. Yes we cant have a total mix of part time folks but we need some part time folks to keep us relevant and we need to be moving people in and out of the training sector. There are some difficulties. Me as someone who employs trainers I have got two problems right now you guys know that you cant find a plumber to put into plumbing teams. It is even more difficult for me to find a plumbing trainer. In addition one of the big hurdles, which is coming, is the training qualifications the actual has been a certificate 4 it is going to be a more complex training qualification for me to let a trainer to go in to a classroom. That is a big hurdle and an extra cost for me. So it is going to be more difficult for us in fact to put part time folks and to bring swing people through but I think the Industry needs to look at that and how we do that and that needs to be seen as a legitimate path for people to swing in and out of training. It is going to become more difficult but it certainly is I think the best way to do it to keep training relevant and up to date is to have that good mix of longer-termers but not permanent and short-termers.

.... Ones that are operating and you try and get money out of them and it is just impossible and so it is all government driven.

There is no doubt that the funding of the system is where the problem is and the models that we have for both employer fundings and college fundings is a major issue. We have the same factors in NSW about the age of teachers. Majority of our plumbing schools within the TAFE system operate only on the basis of part time teachers the number of full time teachers is declining all the time. The process by which those plumbers are changed and want to become teachers in the system is not the best it is basically there is no formal process for qualification of those people it is only those with an interest who are brought in to basically prop the system up in the long term. I think there is two points that were made. One this whole issue about commitment to the continuation of large plumbing schools to train apprentices is the major problem for the Industry. Governments and especially the government in NSW when you meet with their senior bureaucrats will tell you it is much easier to replace a plumbing school with 10 classrooms where they can put 50 computer trainees through it because they get the same benefit of the process out of the cost of running a plumbing school. And that is a major problem for Industry and Industry has to face up to that that somewhere along the line a government in the next 10 years is going to say they go and you find another mechanism. Our concerns are from the perspective of the Master Plumbers Association NSW that we see competency based assessment on the job as being a problem in that area that could lead to it but that is a different argument. The other point that was made over here about the quality of kids coming into training. I manage, assist a group training company that has 250 boys in training we have a 95% completion rate on those boys and that has been that way for some years now but our assessment to get these boys in is a six stage assessment. If you work on only a very minimal class of completion mark at the high school certificate or you boys at any other level the problems you have is that the underpinning knowledge that they have brought out of the school system is

so poor now it is so poor that if you take them at the base level they will never ever be able to cope with the transition to go through trade training and actually complete it. And all our assess what we do of the boys that have trouble in this college system going through it all comes back to this whole view within the school system you do not have a competitive process to complete for mark. In other words there is not set curriculum there is no set exam there is no bar to achieve and if you don't have to achieve that bar you just keep on going. When you leave the school system and come in to the secondary system or the tertiary system of training if you have had that philosophy if you have been through that system then you bring it in and try and go through TAFE you run into the same problem. And what you do is you have the kids that will automatically fall out. We have set our bar to recruit those boys at such a level where if we cant assess when they first start that they are going to get through the system they don't come into the system simple as that and to give you an idea we interviewed this year 2000 plus boys who went through our assessment process for which we took 73 first year apprentices. So we have no trouble with the numbers coming in but get them through the system to get a position, yet the bars very high, and the end result for the Industry at the end of the day four years from now as we are seeing now we turn out really first class apprentices, kids that go on and get very, very high levels in the Certificate 4. When we have a thing in NSW called a gold from the Master Plumbers Association the six candidates for that gold medal this year in the Certificate 4 course in NSW all had better than 13 distinctions in their TAFE certificate 4 all had better than 13 distinctions. Now that, when you talk about there is no quality kids coming out of the system, there is tremendous quality kids coming out of the system.

Q. Through the Commonwealth and through our VCITF the employers are on a direct line get about 14000 dollars to employ an apprentice how do you deal with those students who don't have the academic qualifications that you are able to assess in a group training scheme?

A. Well I don't have to do all those because I only deal with the ones that come into our group training schemes.

Q. But from our end as trainers we have to deal with everybody that comes in through the door and once he's apprenticed we have to give him extra skills to try and pick up and bring the level required for to attain his trade or journeyman's or tradesman certificate.

A. But unfortunately that is the problem that we have at the present time there is a body of the Industry that says out there I'll take a 15 year old kid I don't care whether he didn't do very well in the schools certificate and because I did this model 20 years ago and went through training that can happen today. Unfortunately that is not going to work and it doesn't work. They are the ones that start apprenticeships and drop out after 2 years they just can't hack it in the trade course. One of the problems and I don't know what happens in other states but in NSW if you are just attend the TAFE system at the end of the process you get a crafts certificate right you don't have to finish certificate 3 but you will be given a crafts certificate which means you can go and work as a journeyman that's an appalling situation. It shouldn't be condoned by the Industry because it's all your doing people talking around here about sort of raising the profile of plumbers whilst ever you have a situation where that's allowed in the education system to be granted this because you show up at the end of the day 10 years from now they will that will still be a problem to us. It brings it down all the time. If you want to take the Industry forward we have to be more proactive in changing the school based system to one encourage apprenticeships as a very good profession to take on and two we have to be very very hard about trying to raise the

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bar in the school system so the Industry just doesn't pick up what's left over after career's advisors etc encourage kids to go out and take on University education or become IT experts or everything else and when they can't do any of that because they can't get in the bar because that bar is set too high become a tradesman.

I don't necessarily disagree with that either. No I don't disagree.

There is another issue too. Probably many of you are not aware of TAFE offers a salary of \$28,000 to a new lecturer. Now how many of you, no, no the full time. So many of you in this auditorium here would take on a job for \$28,000 putting up with kids and all day and its problems the politics and whatever that's the bottom line so we have men come in good men coming in to be interviewed and just say hey, forget it mate. So unless we get support and push from the Masters plumbers Association you're training facilities people your government organizations and push these premiers so they will pay a decent salary for a man so that he can survive feed his kids we are not going to get them through the door. Anyway. Thanks.

The basic plumbing level they are running they're own businesses or they working to achieve an end result within the Industry. What I have seen in another Industry, which is the Nursing profession, they have a very big shortage of people doing the groundwork and this is where the people that are on NSW the training gold star apprentices they are going to be the people that will go on and lead their businesses. What we don't have is the people in the Industry to do the basic's to do the foot-works in the trenches so to speak and that is where I think the Industry needs to be working to bring people in to it to be doing that training but they have to be trained through the whole system there is a lot of people within the past that haven't been academics but they have been very good plumbers at doing the work. Because they can handle the physical skills well. So I think we have got to find a mix between that and not just the straight out academics at the top of the tree because if we do that the Industry is going to fall over.

I'd agree with that in my experience I went through the public works for a couple of years and found that the apprentices that went through there ended up to have a reasonable standard that doesn't happen any more it has been disbanded but what I found out of that was you have the educated ones the ones who should have been maybe an accountant or a lawyer or whatever put them on the task digging a trench and they would lose interest they were past just doing that sort of thing. So I think this mix is important. The other thing that I wanted to bring up was we struggle in our business and I hear you all talking about training ok training but we struggle in our business to get diversified tradesmen. It seems to me that you are going down the plight of segregating chopping up the Industry into segments and they are not getting the full training so at the end of the day from a maintenance perspective we find it very hard to find good competent tradesmen you can't even get tradesmen at the moment anyway but you try and get someone who can get on a roof fix some reticulation flow circuits lines or the diversity is just not there we found trying to employ these people and I think that is probably something that needs to be addressed.

Ok well I think that we will close off that forum section at the moment I will ask Max if he would kindly come up and just fill in and it is probably of more interest probably to the WA people but just fill in where WA is at looking at these competencies and whether there is any pit falls in that and then after that we will break for morning tea and then we will return to the forum section.

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Good morning all, and if you can excuse my voice, it's a bit horse at the moment. Steve has just asked me to speak on a few words about where WA is with the National Training Package. As he said earlier I am a member of the National Plumbing and Services Training Advisory Group that we have worked with ANTA and ANZRA through Michael Kefford and Graeme Perry to bring the resources that ANTA had spent some money on to a standard required to be delivered across all States - and with a bit of luck and a lot of hard work - they will be completed towards the end of November.

We in WA are looking at introducing the new training package somewhere in 2005. As yet, not sure whether early or mid year. One of our biggest problems in talking to MPA and other trainers is resources, and we will be talking to Industry. Because the new training package deals with hands on training rather than the theoretical sense and leaving it to an employer to train and I'm glad the gentleman over here mentioned about diversity of training. I am one of these apprentices that went through a government agency many years ago as an apprentice and we run across this problem when I teach the Cert 4 the current license, in that we have to take students almost back to apprentice level to understand concepts that they used to do as part of their training. The Industry with subcontracting has now created this problem they have people in specializing areas when you put them in situations that is not familiar to them they have no knowledge of it and this is now being reflected in the quality of the tradesman we have when we talk about qualities broadness of knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge to any area. So we are looking at industry and in my case we have been supported by them very well we bring in their specialists to teach these areas that are no longer available. Other companies are coming forward to

help there have been some very good discussions with our advertisers this morning with people in the forum, that have come forth with many good ideas about helping in training so resources are going to be one of the difficult components because all the new requirements the training package says must do hands on type training. IF anybody has got any questions I will answer them as we are going along. I just said it was talked about finance government money, the governments got a bucket that has only got so many dollars in it and it is trying to meet everybody's needs. Industry needs to look at how they can help in the training because they are going to get the benefit of the training that comes out. As far as teachers go its certainly a problem as Garry said have a mix between full time and part time and relevant or current competencies to be able to pass that knowledge on to students. There is professional and career development within the department for those that have the time to be able to go and do it to update their skills and certainly Industry has training courses available or information nights where people can be available themselves of a whole range of information in new products and technologies. That's about all I have got to say on this component at the moment.

The end of the apprenticeship there are discussions at the moment again it comes to a dollar factor as to where the money is going to come from whether it is going to be an assessment within the training period. When industry or when the training sector certainly would like to have an end of training assessment so that the student can demonstrate that he has learnt a whole range of skills that he can put or put them together in a final project that he understands a combination of the concepts. IN the electrical industry talked about it and it has been referred to as capstone which is a word that is out of vogue, that is why I call it an end of training assessment, what simply happened is that the training department has reduced a number of hours in the apprenticeship and said right we will take 20 hours out of the apprenticeship and that is where the final assessment will come from. The biggest problems is who is going to maintain that assessment and maintain the validity and integrity of that

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assessment. The electricians have gone down the road of a through West one which is our training publisher in Western Australia and with an on line assessment. We are looking at a number of options that way to see which is the best one when the training package comes on board and in discussions with the National with ANTA and ANZRA and other States to try and have a National one so that it is transported across all States.

..... in your opinion or do you see that end of apprenticeship examination being performed by an Independent third party examination panel.

Were looking at a couple areas there it would appear that the best road to take at the moment in the discussions that I have had and they are still in an ebb and flow situation at the moment that it would be done by an Independent training organization or body there has nothing said in concrete yet.

Similar to the body that does the licensing so that all people who sit for the assessment will be on an equal playing field that no individual inputs that because you know a student so you think well I know what he is talking about. We want a level playing field, and it will be conducted by an independent body so that there is it is an equal and fair assessment

So that independent body could be doing both end of apprenticeship assessments, plumbing license assessments and even further on down the track diploma assessments.

Certainly could one of the options that we looked at is that area that it could be one body to do all those assessments.

And the biggest issue there of course is funding, who is going to maintain it who is going to make sure that is going to remain valid.

And what are the other States doing are they going down a similar path or?

The other States I am not sure exactly there is lots of talking at the moment because we are all in a state of flux with the introduction of the training packages. So there is nothing that I am aware that is on a concrete basis. Victoria have done some work on it but it is still in a discussion stage.

It is a National one that is absolutely.