

**AEU Response Paper
to
CIT Organisation Review
Consultation Paper,
2006**

SUMMARY OF AEU RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *The AEU appreciates the opportunity to respond to the proposed changes to CIT operations as outlined in the Organisational Review Consultation Paper. The members appreciate the wisdom of the CIT in opening this process up for comment and consultation by members. The consultation process has contributed to the improvement of morale and emotional well being of members and will do much to ease the transition of staff into a changing and potentially more stressful environment.*
2. *The AEU recommends that no changes to delivery, spilling of positions or declaring positions excess be attempted until the cost or restructuring, re-tooling, re-equipping etc be ascertained and the funding and time frames to achieve these changes is determined and provided.*
3. *The AEU recommends that no changes to delivery, spilling of positions or declaring positions excess be attempted until the new position descriptions have been developed which demonstrate transparently a >50% change to the position description.*
4. *The AEU recommends that marketing of CIT programs and offerings be maintained at current levels or improved to guarantee and improve the position of CIT within the ACT training market.*
5. *The AEU recommends the establishment of Faculty based entrepreneurial business managers responsible for seeking and developing new training opportunities from Government and private funding sources. These officers would liaise with CIT Solutions to facilitate the offering of courses and would then receive funding, as negotiated, to support the Faculty budget.*
6. *The AEU recommends that CIT give consideration to establishing a cross Faculty office which will seek out and secure opportunities for training programs in the public and private sectors. This office will be responsible also for providing quality customer service and will tailor training programs in direct consultation with clients.*

7. *The AEU recommends that CIT investigate the sustainability of Weston Campus, of hard science delivery and other marginal delivery areas and to both determine and provide for appropriate funding levels to maintain sustainability of these areas should this funding level found to be less than that provided.*
8. *The AEU recommends the establishment of a review panel as soon as possible to establish guidelines for training managers of the parameters informing class size determination and teaching hour allocations in flexible and on-line delivery situations.*
9. *The AEU recommends that CIT investigate the disparity between Nominal and Actual delivery hours for Modules and Competencies offered across CIT and make appropriate adjustments to ensure that students receive suitable value for their fee payments.*
10. *The AEU recommends that no increase in class sizes be imposed at CIT until determination is completed on the consequences and impacts of these class size increases on affected teaching and support staff and on the health and welfare of students. Any action deemed necessary must then be taken to ensure the safety and welfare of all parties before any class size increases consequent on the Teachers' EBA are instigated.*
11. *The AEU deplores CIT's continuous use of 'creep' of responsibility for training and management to poorer paid positions in an effort to extract workplace efficiencies. Similarly, the cuts in technical staff and administration officers in some Faculties (eg chemistry / lab sciences / Automotive and Metals), with the assumption that Band 1 teachers will complete their duties, is unacceptable.*
12. *The AEU recommends that no spillage of positions in the Department of Automotive and Metals be pursued until the suggested position descriptions have been completed and which clearly identifies a >50% change to the existing position description. The AEU would also want evidence that the position can continue to deliver the necessary traditional training in Auto-electrics to meet the needs of training for existing apprenticeships.*
13. *The AEU recommends that any STP position in User Choice coordination within the Department of Automotive and Metals should be a rotating position for 3 years to allow Band 1 members in that Department the opportunity for professional development.*
14. *The AEU recommends that the industrial visits/liaisons within the Department of Automotive and Metals be maintained by the teachers established and maintain existing industry relationships, to both ensure marketing advantages and to minimize duplication of CIT contact with employers*

15. *The AEU recommends that the alternative approach to reorganization of the Electrotechnology Department (listed in Appendix B) be given objective and appropriate consideration as a viable alternative to that originally recommended in the document.*
16. *The AEU recommends that staff in the Department of Laboratory Science and Forensic be adequately funded and supported to maintain delivery of existing programs and to permit flexibility for future development.*
17. *The AEU recommends that CIT negotiate with TATE to reduce both the administration and reporting requirements of User Choice programs in the Department of Horticulture and renegotiate the funding of the program to make it economically viable and sustainable.*
18. *Should CIT be committed to the closure of Weston campus, the AEU recommends that CIT give a timeframe for the closure of the Weston campus and provide the necessary funding for staff to re-establish plantings and infrastructure to an alternative accommodation site. In addition, that CIT provide necessary staff and funding to maintain the grounds and campus structures at Weston in the interim period until the Department transfers to alternative accommodation.*
19. *The AEU recommends that the establishment of the 'Centres of Excellence' proposed for FOCCUS be regularly reviewed to ensure that staff, students and industry are adequately supported.*
20. *The AEU recommends the maintenance of 3 x Teacher Band 2's in the FOCCUS Centre for Community Services and that one of these be a specialized Community Development Teacher Band 2 to meet the needs of the client group, industry and ACT community.*

GENERAL ISSUES AND COMMENTS ON THE PAPER AND THE PROCESS

CONSULTATION PROCESS

The AEU appreciates the opportunity to respond to the proposed changes to CIT operations as outlined in the Organisational Review Consultation Paper. The members appreciate the wisdom of the CIT in opening this process up for comment and consultation by members.

Many members found that this process allowed them to express their frustrations and anger about current and past management decisions and to commence the process towards resolution of some long standing associated resentments. Hence, members appreciated the process of being informed, listened to and consulted about proposed changes to their working conditions. The consultation process has contributed to the improvement of morale and emotional well being of members and will do much to ease the transition of staff into a changing and potentially more stressful environment.

This said, during the consultation process there were a number of concerns and suggestions raised by members and some recommendations to adapt to the funding cuts that are worthy of consideration.

CONSULTATION PAPER

The Organisational Review Consultation paper appears disconnected as management decisions appear to dominate the paper while educational considerations seemed to be diminished in the paper. Given that CIT's core business is education, it is reasonable to assume that teachers and students would receive due consideration in this document.

In addition, the document appeared to be vague in its descriptions of proposed changes. It was unclear as to which positions were to be declared excess, which were to be transferred to Shared Services and which were unchanged. In addition, many changes have been mooted which will require the purchasing of new tools and equipment and / or the development of new infrastructure, both at a cost. No estimates have been provided in the paper or in discussion with Deans to access the cost or time frames of these changes to assets and equipment. Teachers cannot continue to deliver the Nominal Hours required if CIT reduces staffing while not adequately resourcing teachers and the learning environment.

Hence, the AEU recommends that no changes to delivery, spilling of positions or declaring positions excess be attempted until the cost or restructuring, re-tooling, re-equipping etc be ascertained and the funding and time frames to achieve these changes is determined and provided. Similarly, the positions which are identified in

the Review for spilling and reappointing have no accompanying evidence that they have been changed by >50%. Again, the AEU recommends that no changes to delivery, spilling of positions or declaring positions excess be attempted until the new position descriptions have been developed which demonstrate transparently a >50% change to the position description.

MARKETING CONCERNS

Members were concerned that the responsibility for marketing is to be devolved to the Faculties and Departments while no additional funding will be provided to support this role. Staff are acutely aware that CIT is in a competitive industry and needs to be branded and sold appropriately. Staff questioned where the marketing expertise would lie at CIT as they observe that it does not reside within the Faculties. No clear suggestions about how CIT will be marketed were found in the document to allay the fears of continued reduction in clients and loss of market position in the education and training arena. The AEU therefore recommends that marketing of CIT programs and offerings be maintained at current levels or improved to guarantee and improve the position of CIT within the ACT training market.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Questions were raised by some members about the openness, transparency and equity of the consultation process. Ideally, Teacher Band 2's as the education managers should have been comprehensively consulted before the paper was written. In many cases those Band 2's directly affected were inadequately consulted about changes or the impacts of any such changes listed in the Consultation paper.

In addition, during the discussion processes across the Institute, when teachers offered alternatives solutions to staff cuts they believed they were not always listened to with respect but were occasionally dismissed out of hand as not being credible, before due consideration was given to the suggestions.

MISLEADING INFORMATION

Members have repeatedly reported that some Deans have continued to state that non teaching position cuts are being attributed to the teachers EBA 1% efficiencies funded pay increase when there is obviously no connection between administrative roles and class sizes. This misinformation does nothing to consolidate healthy relationships between teaching and non teaching staff and has serious negative impact on staff morale across the Institute. This misinformation needs to be clearly addressed Institute management

ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES

It may seem incongruous that a Union would be promoting entrepreneurial activities in a Government organization but, in the interest of maintaining members' employment and growing the membership, the AEU makes the following observations.

CIT and CIT Solutions

Attempts by staff to propose innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to increase income and alleviate the need for staffing cuts were dismissed in some Faculty meetings. The standard response by several Deans was that entrepreneurial activity was the domain of CIT Solutions. Staff indicated that the funding from CIT Solutions would eventually filter back into the CIT budget but the Deans indicated that it would not be directed into the Faculty budget and implied that they were unlikely to spend time promoting new initiatives. Staff were concerned that this management approach demonstrates little forward looking to growth and members were concerned by the apparent resistance by some Deans to entrepreneurial activity which could save jobs in the Institute.

Members also expressed the desire to revisit the relationship between CIT and CIT Solutions to ensure that such an impasse would not impede the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities in the future. The previous arrangement which found Faculty based entrepreneurial business managers who were responsible for searching out and developing new funded training opportunities from Government and private funding sources. They would then liaise with CIT Solutions to facilitate the offering of courses and would then receive funding, as negotiated, to support the Faculty budget. Such arrangements permitted direct funding inputs from extra activity and encouraged innovation and development of new programs within Faculties. Such arrangements will become all the more imperative and attractive given the new Federal Government initiatives in the provision of training vouchers for mature aged students.

Members have identified that many of the entrepreneurial opportunities that exist in the ACT community incorporate multi-Faculty based training programs. Due to the historical 'siloeing' of operations at CIT into the Faculties, there is a poor history of successful tendering and delivery of such cross Faculty programs by CIT and this inhibits the potential for growth of the organization. The AEU recommends that CIT give consideration to establishing a cross Faculty office which will seek out and secure opportunities for training programs in the public and private sectors. This office will be responsible also for providing quality customer service and will tailor training programs in direct consultation with clients.

CRITICAL FUNDING ISSUES

Several of the proposals listed in the Consultation paper have focused on extending staffing cuts to areas within CIT that have been subjected to several waves of staffing cuts over the past decade. It is understood that any Department or training program requires certain infrastructure of staff and physical resources to support it. This baseline infrastructure must be provided if there is one student or hundreds of students

in the program. Once the ACT Government has decided that CIT should offer certain programs then it has the obligation to supply the necessary support funding to at least meet the critical funding levels so that the program may be delivered.

Successive waves of funding cuts and the associated diminution of manpower and resources have swept over many Departments at CIT so that the point where it is apparent that funding has fallen below this critical level and many Departments are fast becoming unsustainable. In such cases, the CIT is obliged to revisit the decision to offer these programs at CIT and, if so, to appropriately fund them.

Cases in point in the current funding cuts are centered on the SCITECH Faculty which has borne the major burden of funding cuts and include the offerings of Year 12 programs, the hard sciences, maths etc, and Horticulture. Other programs are likewise teetering on the brink of unsustainability. The AEU recommends that CIT instigate investigation into the sustainability of Weston Campus, of hard science delivery and other marginal delivery areas, to determine and provide for appropriate funding levels to maintain sustainability should this funding level found to be less than that provided.

SKILLS SHORTAGES

TABLE 1 *ESTIMATED STAFFING REARRANGEMENTS

Faculty	Lost Tech & Admin staff	Lost TB1	Lost TB2	Gained	Total Teaching positions
FOCUS	2		1.5		1.5
T&H	1		1		1
DESIGN	2	4	1		5
BITS	1.5	2			2
SCITECH	11 (or 18 with transfer)	11.3	1	2 STP	10.3
LEARNING SERVICES	21	0.6	2	NA	2.6
TOTAL	38.5	17.9	6.5	2	22.4

* Estimates taken from the Consultation paper.

(NOTE these figures are estimates due to the vagaries of the material presented in the document.)

Table 1 approximates the proposed rearrangements of staffing within CIT. Clearly, SCITECH expects to make approximately 50% of teaching staff cuts. Many of these are identified to be focused on disciplines identified as skills shortage areas (including automotive / auto-electrical, panel beating, science / chemistry, building etc).

In addition, the general cutting of teaching staff will affect CIT's capacity to deliver training in these and other disciplines for a number of reasons;

1.

The proposed maintenance of delivery of nominal hours while reducing funding and teacher numbers will result in increased teacher stress. This resulting pressure on teachers to further reduce training hours / Module. Students are already reporting that they are paying for nominal training hours may be up to 2.5 times greater than the actual hours of training that they are receiving. This situation will become a further embarrassment to CIT as ACT Government induced fee increases of 10% p.a. commence in Semester 1 2007, when students will be asked to pay more for significantly less training. The AEU recommends that CIT investigate the disparity between Nominal and Actual delivery hours for Modules and Competencies offered across CIT and make appropriate adjustments to ensure that students receive suitable value for their fee payments.

'Nominal hours' are determined by curriculum experts as the optimum training hours to present and assess the relevant information associated with a Competency or Module. For the past 9 years there has been consistent pressure on teachers to reduce the delivery hours below that of nominal hours. Phrases such as 'increased delivery flexibility' and 'efficiencies' have been used to undermine the quality of training delivered at CIT. Many students and employers have expressed concern as they witness the erosion of training quality at CIT.

So teachers have been asked to compromise to achieve these annual increases in 'efficiencies'. These compromises usually entail deletion of the 'underpinning skills' associated with the training, reductions in practice of skills and reductions in assessment. The determination of delivery hours in many Departments is determined by a simple equation:

$$\text{Delivery Hours} = \text{Nominal Hours} \times \frac{\text{Number of students in class}}{\text{Number in 'Minimum' class size}}$$

Such arbitrary assessments of delivery hours of training are purely management based and do not reflect the educational and training needs of the students, the teacher or the subject content. The pressure to take these shortcuts in hours of training delivery raises doubts about CIT credibility in the training industry. At what point do these compromises in training delivery and assessment force teachers into fraudulent reporting of 'competency' of students? How will the changing of funding to "outcomes" based impact even further on the potential for such misreporting behaviour?

The AEU recommends the establishment of a review panel as soon as possible to establish guidelines for training managers of the parameters informing class size determination.

2.

Alternatively, to achieve further 'efficiencies' teachers may be forced to increase student numbers in classes which will impact on Occupational Health and Safety and

risk management issues in the class room. The Organisation Review document seems to demonstrate little consideration of the consequences and impacts of these proposed cuts of teaching and support staff on the health and welfare of staff or students affected.

The AEU recommends that no increase in class sizes be imposed at CIT until determination is completed on the consequences and impacts of these class size increases on affected teaching and support staff and on the health and welfare of students. Any action deemed necessary must then be taken to ensure the safety and welfare of all parties before any class size increases are instigated.

DEVOLUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Several instances of devolution of Band 2 responsibilities to STPs and Band 1's have been highlighted in this document (eg FOCCUS, SCITECH, Design, Learning Services etc). The AEU deplores CIT's continuous use of 'creep' of responsibility for training and management to poorer paid positions in an effort to extract 'efficiencies'. Similarly, the huge cuts in technical staff and administration officers in some Faculties (eg chemistry / lab sciences / Automotive and Metals), with the assumption that Band 1 teachers will complete their roles is unacceptable to members.

RESPONSES BY FACULTY

FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCITECH appears to bear the brunt of teacher cost savings (approx 50%) by making drastic changes teacher work loads with the Dean's suggested increasing administration and technical support roles. No explanation was presented in the Consultation document to explain the reason for allocation of the extensive reductions being imposed on this Faculty by comparison with others.

The major staffing cuts in SCITECH appear to focus on the Departments which are responsible for delivering training in the identified 'skills shortage' disciplines (building, construction, automotive, science etc). These areas are focused for 'efficiencies' but many of the competencies that are delivered in these programs require intensive training and skills practice time for students to achieve competencies. The practical components of competencies such as paving, bricklaying, surveying, heavy and light machinery operation, tool operation and maintenance etc cannot be delivered flexibly in a computer lab in off-the-job training programs. Neither can these practice hours be provided for 'on-the-job' if employers do not have the facilities and equipment to service all the items listed within the national curricula or if the students are under purchase provider funding.

ELECTROTECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Appendix B outlines an alternative proposal to that suggested in the Organisation Review document which provides for similar budget outcomes but with significantly reduced impact on the services delivered by the Department. At the time of writing this response, this proposal was offered to the Dean and it is hoped that the proposal may be given objective and appropriate consideration as a viable alternative to that originally recommended in the document. This consultation is ongoing.

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT

Members identified that the proposal to reduce Occupational Health & Safety theory (Green Card) training 'up front' provides no saving as teachers will be required to teach the theory although they receive no additional time to train in the program. Teachers were not told to reduce the teaching in other classes to account for the extra training they must provide. No constructive suggestions as to what should be deleted from programs was offered to teachers.

In addition, it appears that CIT is 'toying' with industry as no worker can legally work on a construction site without possessing a Green Card yet CIT has withdrawn the training and provision of this qualification with the added assertion "...if they want it they will have to pay for it..." Members are at a loss to ascertain how this attitude towards industry will provide CIT with a market advantage in a competitive building and construction training industry.

Teachers expressed concerns about increasing risk and hazards with increasing class sizes. They also focused on the already shortfalls in computer labs services and flexibility in accessing the labs. It has been also identified that the lack of availability of Computer labs at Bruce will be exacerbated when BITS removes Bruce based computer labs to Reid. This matter was not mentioned at meetings at Bruce and no details were provided re funding provision for upgrading computer labs.

AUTOMOTIVE & METALS DEPARTMENT

Two areas within the Department were targeted for spilling positions or position amendment. Coincidentally these include positions which are currently occupied by the two teachers who have been subjected to failed disciplinary action by the Head of Department. There is a recommended spillage of and redesigning of a position in Auto-electrics. However, there is no evidence that the position will be changed by 50% and no position description has been forthcoming despite requests over a week ago.

The AEU recommends that no spillage be pursued until the suggested position descriptions have been completed and which clearly identifies a >50% change to the existing position description. The AEU would also want evidence that the position can continue to deliver the necessary traditional training in Auto-electrics to meet the needs of training for existing apprenticeships.

Proposed STP position

The proposal includes the establishment of an STP position with the suggested responsibilities already being performed by a TB1. Members are at a loss to understand the rationale behind increasing the costs of the Department when positions are templated for being declared excess. No explanation has been offered to members to justify such a position creation. Given that there has been only one person coordinating User Choice over the past 3 years in the Department (and acting HoD also), it is believed by members that this person has an unfair advantage in any merit process for a proposed STP position. It is suggested that any such position should be a rotating position for 3 years to provide Band 1 teachers in the Department the opportunity for professional development.

Industry Visits

The proposal includes the intent to cease funding industrial visits by individual teachers but to have all visits completed by a single STP. Members believe that this approach will lead to reduced industry contact by the teachers who have the industrial expertise and credibility to discuss both the nature of the industry training needs and to relate the performance and behaviour issues of individual students. The STP will not possess the necessary industry experience nor credibility and members feel that this approach to servicing industry could impact negatively on the promotion and marketing of the Department. Currently, training in the Automotive industry in the ACT is serviced by a number of RTO's; including private providers. Any loss of credible personal contact with employers by staff will necessarily impact on the marketing of the programs and is likely to inevitably lead to reduced student enrolments.

In any event, teachers will be required to speak with employers to relate student assessment and management issues so these contacts will need to be funded, thus duplicating services and associated costs. It is therefore recommended that CIT maintain the industrial visits/liasons by the teachers to maintain the established industry relationships to ensure marketing advantages and to minimize duplication of CIT contact with employers.

Class Size Issues

Members are also concerned about the proposed increases in class sizes. Little information about the impact of these class size increases on OH&S issues has been presented and staff are concerned that increased class sizes can be achieved in a safe environment. The accompanying letters in **Appendix A** highlight the issues of concern including 'line of sight', supervision quality etc. Any increase in class sizes will generate associated needs for new tools and equip to meet new class sizes. Once again, no evidence was provided to members of any study of additional requirements or funding for these infrastructure changes.

LABORITARY SCIENCE & FORENSIC DEPARTMENT

Members were concerned to hear of the proposed loss of a Band 2 position with the roles and responsibilities being devolved to a rotating STP position. Staff identified that the Department is already fragmented due to the relatively recent amalgamation of the two Departments. Staff complained of the proposal to cut the number of Band 1 teachers (or reductions in their workload) while the employment of casuals in areas of 'expertise' in the Forensic area continued. While some Band 1 teachers are currently teaching in areas in which they have limited expertise, they feel that they may be capable of up-skilling to take on several of the 'expert' training roles currently filled by casual teachers. However, this approach would need to be carefully managed in consultation with the STP and Band 2 staff in the Department so as to not impact on the credibility and quality of the Forensic program.

Teachers unanimously stated that they are not interested in taking voluntary reductions of loads (by 0.2 each) as suggested in the Consultation paper. The management response to this situation was to reduce the number of casuals in the Department. However, the casuals in the Department were identified to be specialist teachers in the Forensic section, an area which has the potential for massive growth and development given reported expressions of interest from overseas potential customers. It is believed that any reduction in casual teachers and teaching services offered in Forensic may inhibit the development of these marketing opportunities as the program developers/marketers will be fully occupied in teaching.

Neither of these options to reduce teaching costs appears to be a satisfactory solution to proposed funding cuts; the former is not condoned by the AEU while the latter has potential to undermining of the Forensic program which would be an undesirable outcome for the CIT and ACT community.

The proposed declaring 'excess' of the TO assistance in Chemistry was considered to be an highly problematic decision as the role is very important and labour intensive while no suggestions as to how the work would be completed, and by whom, were offered at the meeting.

HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Horticulture is unique in the CIT as a single purpose campus. The campus houses several cross Faculty programs which are also serviced by the Department. In addition, the Department provides offerings in many disciplines within the Horticultural industry through purchaser provider funding, User Choice funding as Special Projects Funding (eg Floristry, Landscaping, Turf, Nursery, Quamby, etc).

The maintenance of the extensive campus and associated gardens, glass houses, training infrastructure, plantings etc to support these training offerings falls on the shoulders of the technical support staff. Integration of teaching functions and the maintenance of the campus has been attempted with limited success as a conflict arises between student practice and abuse of the teaching role to offset grounds maintenance costs. Training programs are aimed at teaching students, not at campus maintenance.

Staffing cuts in 2000-1 in the Horticulture Department reduced the number of full time teaching and support staff by approximately 40%. No significant reduction in the area of grounds to be maintained was countenanced at that time so the quality of maintenance has necessarily deteriorated, despite diligent efforts by staff to prevent this. The grounds are now becoming an embarrassment to CIT and do not reflect the image of best practice that the Department nor CIT wishes to portray.

The current staffing cuts, while they do not focus on the reduction in technical staff, do nothing to alleviate the excessive burden on existing staff and the progressive deterioration of the campus. Given the imminent closure of the campus, and despite the requests of staff, no recommendation was given to staff to consolidate their efforts to focus on smaller areas of quality grounds maintenance in support of existing training programs. Hence, staff remain stressed and are caught in a demoralizing situation.

The rationale behind teacher cuts in the Consultation paper focuses on a projected 30,000 NH reduction in 2007. This was translated into 3 x Band 1 positions based on a formula (10,000NH / TB1) used some 10 years ago. Recent publication in ACT Teacher indicates that this figure no longer holds for management calculations and that the Faculties are currently using at least >13,000NH/TB1 as the standard. Hence, using CIT's own management figures, it seems excessive to consider a cutting of 3 x Band 1 positions within the Department. If other considerations were incorporated into the rationale for these teacher cuts they were not made clear in this Consultation paper.

User Choice

Members identified that the offering of User Choice programs in Horticulture were not cost effective as the funding received does not cover the costs of delivery, reporting and administration. Staff recommended that the CIT reconsider offering such programs and/or negotiate reductions in the reporting requirements for User Choice while seeking enhanced funding to more realistic levels to support the programs. Members also recommended consideration of changes to the way User Choice is offered to allow for 'block release', thus permitting greater accessibility from NSW apprentices.

FACULTY OF COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The concept of developing super-Departments or “Centres of Excellence” was received by members as a commendable solution to achieve greater flexibility, responsiveness to industry and cost efficiencies. Concern was raised that the establishment of these Centres will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that staff, students and industry are adequately supported.

COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE

The Community Services Centre is an area of growth within the Faculty and is envisaged to include the existing Departments of Community Development, Child Studies and Human Services. Together, the Departments of Community Development and Human Services have grown by 70,000NH p.a in recent years.

However, the proposal identified the retirement of the TB2 in the Department of Community Development who will not be replaced. The roles and responsibilities of this position are to be shared by two other Band 2 teachers who are already fully occupied in managing their existing Departments. This arrangement is perceived by members as inequitable as this proposal will effectively leave 2 x Band 2 teachers managing 500,000NH p.a. (cf 3.5 x Band 2’s in Vocational College servicing some 600,000NH and 2 x Band 2’s servicing 250,000NH in the Music and Media Centre).

Members and other staff have expressed concern that this Department is very unique in its student offerings, client groups, staffing profile and industry requirements which require that the Department has both expert industry championing and representation at any Faculty and CIT forums. In addition, the loss of this position would severely impede the career pathways for existing and future Band 1 teachers.

The Department of Community Development boasts exceptional annual growth over the past 4 years and has been identified as a unique working and learning environment. The curricula offered in the Department is not solely determined by National Curricula but is modified to suit local industry needs. In fact, local industry has informed the development of curricula which is adapted and flexible so that it can be delivered in Quamby, Belconnen Remand Centre and community services work environments.

Similarly, the nature of clients attending Purchaser Provider programs include representation from all diversity and disadvantage groups within the ACT community. Many community counseling organizations refer long term and short term clients to the various programs on offer in Drug and Alcohol counseling, Personal Development etc because the Department has an excellent record of encouraging and promoting personal growth, development and healing. As such, the Department offers an exceptional community service in the mental health sphere of the ACT community.

The maintenance of this service requires a unique mix of talent, experience and patience to provide initial individual counseling and support to struggling students by the Band 2 teacher. The new proposal does not show evidence for continuation of this role and members are concerned that the future retention of students would be potentially jeopardized.

In addition, the Department offers a 'value neutral' teaching philosophy whereby participants are encouraged to discuss and debate their personal beliefs and philosophies (including the tension between social work and community development), to listen to other experiences, to grow and develop in a healthy and diverse training environment. The students and staff exhibit passion which has provided both the engine and fuel for the growth exhibited by the Department.

The Organisational Review paper and associated discussions have centered around combining classes of similar module description with other Departments, to achieve economies of scale. However, these alternative Departments teach the subject matter in completely different ways relative to their client groups. For example, the focus of class content from the perspectives of child pedagogy or 'the medical model' (nursing) would not provide the richness and of education required for drug and alcohol counselors or Corrections officers etc.

The Department services the Government and non-government sector alike (cf others in the Centre service Government alone) and have a high percentage of special needs clients (including refugees, Indigenous, and also mental health and substance dependent individuals etc). In these ways, it is unique within the CIT and hence requires special consideration. Members feel that a reduction in leadership and representation both within industry, the CIT and the ACT community would reduce the passion of the staff and potentially undermine the growth and development of the Department and the services it provides.

CENTRE FOR COMMUNICATION, MEDIA AND MUSIC

Members offered no serious objection to the proposed new Centre but minor concerns included the increased workload of marketing, the need for class size increases, the tenuous nature of existing teaching contracts and the need to save an additional \$32,000 of budgeted training in 2007.

CIT VOCATIONAL COLLEGE CENTRE

The combination of the many programs within the new Centre met with a mixed reception from members, many of whom felt unable to comment as they process of integration of the programs was not clearly identified. The final structure of this Centre and the date of the next consultation meeting was still in negotiation at the time of writing this report.

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The impacts on teaching positions in the BITS Faculty were minimal although workloads will be affected by the proposed changes. AEU members expressed concern for the increasing workloads associated with the proposed increased class sizes and reduction of administration assistance. They expressed the desire to have their workloads assessed in future to ascertain its sustainability. Members were concerned as to how to assess hour allocations to on-line delivery and want this anomaly to be addressed in guidelines for teaching hour and class sizes.

FACULTY OF DESIGN

Members offered no alternative recommendations to achieve budget cuts as the impacts on teachers appeared to be minimal. One Faculty solution to reductions in funding included the reduction of the teaching calendar to 17 week semesters which members were prepared to accommodate. In addition, offers were also made for teachers to consider increasing their personal leave opportunities and flexibility would be increased to allow for this.

FACULTY OF TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT

Members were pleased to understand that “no class room teacher cuts” would accompany the Organization Review and that there would be “a doubling of administration support in each Department and no other cuts to AST positions etc. The AEU is encouraged by the focus of the Faculty towards seeking out new business and to trade its way out of the difficulties faced by the ACT Government budget cuts and the increase of VET in Schools offerings that affect the Faculty.

No objections were lodged regarding the combining of 4 Departments into 3 however members expressed concern over the loss of the Band 2 teaching position and the stress associated with the suggested position spillage and reapplication process.

APPENDIX

Automotive and Metals Department Correspondence

1.

**To: Kathy Korsch,
Dean, SCITECH**

Dear Kathy,

I would like to officially voice some of my concerns regarding the proposed changes for my Department and in particular the spray painting section.

In the first instance, it worries me greatly that management is considering removing our store person and putting the teacher in charge of the store. Issuing tools and materials is time consuming and will result in allowing students in the workshop without supervision creating a potentially hazardous situation for the students. This situation is already bad enough, given the size and layout of the workshop, but will be amplified if the teacher is in the store. Last year 6 line of sight areas within the spray painting workshop were identified by the OH&S officer and looked at by Alan Pomeroy. The final result was that the store person should remain.

Other concerns this situation will create are that tools will be lost or brought back damaged. Spray guns will possibly not be checked for cleanliness. If this type of equipment is not cleaned to a high standard, it could cost CIT dearly in replacement of spray guns. At the moment all equipment is checked by the store person.

My second concern is the proposal of an outside person handling "Industrial Visits" and "User Choice Matters". In my opinion, the new STP will not have specific industry knowledge of all areas and will not be familiar with the students. I foresee employers asking specific questions about their apprentice and the STP person not being able to answer, therefore, referring the questions back to the teacher. This process is inefficient and will only cause frustration for all involved. Industrial visits also help greatly in keeping teachers relevant and up to date.

In conclusion, I would like to request that the store person be retained for the reasons already mentioned and suggest that teachers should be responsible for generating and signing of the training plans. Teachers should also be credited with that visit as per the current arrangement. If however, the decision is made that an independent person should look after User Choice to give more teaching time to the teachers, then that person should be an administration staff. There is no reason why a teacher should fill this position. This strategy would save the department thirty or thirty five thousand dollars a year and make another teacher available to teach rather than wasting him in the office.

I hope my suggestions will be considered and I thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns.

Regards,
Carlos

2.

Kathy Korsch

Dean of faculty Science and Technology

I have a few concerns about the proposed changes to the Department of Automotive, Metals and Logistics. Some I have raised at the consultation meetings and I hope that serious consideration is given to some of the compromise suggestions that have been put forward.

1. The Automotive and panel shop stores

A well stocked, orderly and secure storage facility is vital for success in operating the Automotive mechanical section. There are far too many individual items (up to 10,000) to be successfully shadow-boarded and secured. Also the Panel and paint store needs to be operated. There have been listed reasons why a stores person is required including OH&S requirements for line of sight supervision and ensuring that equipment is returned at the end of the day in a clean and operating condition.

The proposal to have one existing person operate both stores on a programmed rotational basis has merit and needs consideration.

2. Technical officer

The technical officer duties can be expanded to have whole of department operation. But his main job of fitting up and commissioning resources such as new engines so they have safety guards and are safe to operate will still need to be performed from time to time. His other main area of responsibility is maintaining of existing resources and performing urgent repairs of broken down equipment and resources, will still need to be called upon from time to time.

3. Automotive electrical teacher

The proposal to reduce one automotive electrical teacher has not been well thought through. In the light vehicle program a quarter of the content is electrical and this was requested by our local industry. Local industry was impressed to know that the electrical subjects were being delivered by an auto electrical specialist. The proposal is to give some of this back to the mechanical teachers. I believe this to be a backward step.

Yes, there is a decline in automotive electrical Trade students but there is enough work for two teachers when servicing of panel beaters is considered / air conditioning needs developing and it is still proposed to have stage two and stage three light vehicle trade, motorcycle mechanics and Heavy vehicles still taught by one teacher.

Yes, there is a bottle neck of students in the electrical area of ATech but this is because there is too much content, too much of the content in written format, and the conceptual nature of the content is difficult for non electrical students to grasp. In the past two years there have been three qualified electrical teachers in the electrical section of ATech. They have all worked diligently but have all had a bottle neck of

students. " Dumping " part of the content onto the mechanical teachers and getting rid of one of the auto electrical teachers is NOT going to solve the problem. The learning resources needs re-writing and some audio visual aids purchased or developed. Teachers who have a full teaching load do not have the time to do this.

The proposal to effectively reduce the staffing of the ATech by one teacher is going to produce over-crowding of students in the other areas. This needs serious looking at. Many students will not be able to move from area to area if a teacher refuses to have more than 16 in their class at one time.

EQUIPMENT If electrical is to be shifted to the four other areas then a LOT more electrical equipment is going to need to be purchased. But as I have stated the problem of bottle neck in the electrical area is content and delivery problems

There has been a transfer of one technical officer out of the department and one contract stores position is being let go. The remaining technical officer is to be shared and I hope that management can see a way of maximising the effectiveness of the existing last stores officer.

Yours sincerely

Mark Reardon
Automotive teacher
18 / 10 / 2006

3.

To: Korsch, Kathy

Subject: Organisational review

Kathy

Following the Friday 13th Oct 2006 Fyshwick staff meeting to discuss the CIT organisational review and proposed Automotive Metals & Logistics staff changes, I would like to submit further feedback and comment.

Commenting on the ACT Government Budget and the CIT Environment, and the savings that CIT is required to make from the period 2006 through to 2009.

I suggest after staff and financial cuts that the remaining CIT staff be expected to meet existing nominal hours delivered by the Institute is both unrealistic and unreasonable.

It is also proposed in the consultation paper that CIT will need to make productivity improvements to fund the Teacher's EBA pay increase. Again I believe it is an unrealistic expectation on staff to increase productivity and at the same time to be a high quality, respected, innovative and responsive educational institution that offers learning pathways for all. I make these comments in light of some of the department sections within Automotive Metals & Logistics (Auto electrical, Logistics, Auto re-finishing) already having made a reduction to the number of teaching blocks and at the same time expected to produce the same quality outcomes.

When addressing the proposals in achieving efficiencies in teaching delivery and User Choice requirements, it is my opinion by moving delivery to a project basis by reducing the number of store-persons and technical staff is a mistake and a step backwards.

Proposing that teachers assume duties of the store-person and technical staff, apart from being inefficient introduces a number of occupational health and safety matters. I believe if this proposal is adopted, is a second best option for teachers, which will result in lower teacher productivity and the Institute losing financially because of tools being stolen, misplaced and poorly maintained.

The creation of a STP position to coordinate user choice activities could be considered to be performed at a lower staffing level. The staffing level would depend on the duties outlined within the job description. I suggest the person filling this position be employed not just in fulfilling user choice requirements, but also be skilled in marketing. The person engaged in this position would promote CIT, the Department of Metals & Logistics and sell our product both to existing and new employers.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer further comment for consideration.

Regards

Paul Evers

APPENDIX B.

Department of Electro-technology response to Faculty Restructure

Removal of GSO5 position

Importance of this position to the department.

- Need someone who is available 9-5 to undertake a range of duties reliably many of which are not interesting or fulfilling.
- Contact person for students doing project work, operation of dark room
- Procurement and record-keeping of purchase requests etc
- Maintenance of store and equipment to reduce damage/loss
- Routine maintenance of equipment and leads/meters to reduce replacement cost.
- Re-organisation of workshops/labs/office areas

Will replacement with 0.6 TO3 serve these functions?

No. Current TO3 has indicated that he would not anticipate doing any repair work for the department. He sees that he would make a contribution by developing LABVIEW for use across the Faculty. There are already two teachers in Electrotechnology who have been developing LABVIEW for use in Adv Dip classes and also for a Mechanical Engineering project. Further development in this area is not critical for the department at this time.

Importance of retention of trade classes in Electrotechnology

From 2005 to 2006 there has been an increase in both electrical trade and refrigeration and air conditioning apprentices of 35%. Most employers and apprentices are satisfied with the quality of service that is provided by CIT. However, if dissatisfaction does occur, apprentices and employers have been known to switch to a private provider. It is essential that we do all that we can to retain all trade students that are the backbone of the department. This includes operation of practical classes with sufficient functioning equipment.

2007 is going to be a difficult year for all staff in CIT as we learn to deal with increased class sizes, bigger work loads, reduced FMU staff and decreased funding for equipment etc. The availability of functioning equipment for practical classes is a key issue in dealing with larger class sizes. It is the opinion of staff in the department that the retention of the GSO5 role is critical to the smooth running of the department.