

ACEA 2005 Conference

Workshop Abstract

Title: ANTA National Project: Implementation Plan for VET in Corrections National Strategy

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This session will provide an overview of *Rebuilding Lives: VET for Prisoners and Offenders*, an ANTA 2004 project to develop a framework for a national approach to the implementation of vocational education and training for adult prisoners and offenders who are in custody or serving community orders. The implementation framework is a companion document to the *National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training for Adult Prisoners and Offenders in Australia* (ANTA 2001).

The Strategy was developed by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) in conjunction with state/territory correctional administrations, the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and state/territory training authorities in response to a recommendation in the *Report of the inquiry into education and training in correctional facilities* (Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee 1996). The Senate inquiry was initiated as a result of the call for an inquiry by the International Forum on Education in Correctional Systems Association (IFECSA), now known as the Australasian Corrections Education Association (ACEA). The inquiry report recommended that prisoners be identified as 'a discrete target group which is under-represented in vocational education and training'. The ANTA Chief Executive Officers' Committee and the Corrections Administrators endorsed *the Strategy* in 2002.

Rebuilding Lives was developed collaboratively between state and territory corrections and training authorities and ANTA. The project steering committee drew its membership from correctional and education and training jurisdictions in each state and territory. The development of this implementation framework was managed by the TAFE Equity and Outreach Unit, TAFE Equity Strategy and Programs Directorate, TAFE and Community Education, Department of Education and Training, New South Wales. Advice on achieving *the Strategy's* vision was provided by a range of stakeholders working in the provision of education, training and rehabilitation for prisoners and offenders

The framework has been designed to guide implementation until 2010, so that it can be aligned with the implementation of *Shaping Our Future. Rebuilding Lives* will inform national priority setting and resource allocation arrangements, national research priorities and planning in both the VET and corrections sectors. It can be used as the basis for undertaking activity under strategy four of *Shaping Our Future*, which calls for 'positive steps' to be taken 'to achieve equality of participation and achievement' for people 'who face barriers due to ... imprisonment ...' (ANTA 2003, p. 15).

Biographies:

Lindy Cassidy – To be forwarded asap

Ron Cox

Ron is the Manager, Adult Education Vocational Education and Training with the Department of Corrective Services Queensland. In this position Ron is responsible for managing the delivery of education and training to offenders in all Queensland correctional centres. Ron also manages the Post Release Employment Assistance Program that supports ex-prisoners to gain and maintain long term employment post release. Prior to his involvement in corrections Ron has been involved in VET for approximately 26 years within the Queensland TAFE system. Ron has a Bachelor of Education and a Certificate in Mechanical Engineering. Ron is currently the President of the Australasian Corrections Education Association (ACEA).