

22 NOV 2001



Tasmanian  
Employment  
Advisory  
Council Inc.  
ABN 58 012 013 049

19<sup>th</sup> November, 2001.

Job Network Review  
Productivity Commission  
PO Box 80  
BELCONNEN ACT 2616.

TO: Mike Woods – Commissioner  
Dr Ralph Lattimore - Assistant Commissioner.

**Submission – re Job Network**

Please find following points put forward for the Review into the Job Network, which in many cases back comments made at the interview process held at the offices of the Tasmanian Employment Advisory Council - ACC for Tasmania.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,



Sheryl Thomas,  
Executive Officer.

Attch.

## JOB NETWORK The Area Consultative Committee's Role

The role of the Tasmanian Employment Advisory Council, (ACC) is to bring the Job Network Provider managers together, to promote the Job Network to small and medium businesses, and to promote a better understanding of indigenous employment issues to the Job Network.

### Job Network Partnerships Committee

Since the introduction of the Job Network, TEAC has brought the Job Network managers together in a formal meeting process, along with members of DEWRSB, and Centrelink, to discuss issues related to operational, compliance and general issues.

Within such meetings it has allowed issues common to all to be discussed and in many cases addressed by the relevant organization, ie Centelink or DEWRSB. At many meetings it was felt it was a "government" forum to push the issues of DEWRSB and Centrelink

In the first contract period, it was difficult to have a free flow of information around the table as the competitive nature of the Job Network was very evident, and the role played, especially by DEWRSB, was particularly dominant.

During the second contractual period, the openness of the discussion, and interaction between participating managers has certainly strengthened.

The formation of the name "partnerships committee" was developed, with TEAC providing an independent chairperson. It is the role of the committee to provide the vast number of the agenda items, and to identify the structure of the meetings.

The meetings now have a range of guest speakers, enabling a greater flow of information to the JNM's, Centrelink and DEWRSB, and also to allow a broader flow of information on economic and training issues occurring within the state.

The Executive Officer of Jobs Australia, has addressed two meetings of the JNM Partnership committee – to allow for those that are not members of Jobs Australia to benefit from information. Department of State Development, and Industry Training Advisory Boards, also address meetings, to enable JNM's to be aware of employment and training options occurring within the state.

TEAC's role in the promotion of the Job Network to small and medium business, has been through;

- The development of brochures, flyers, promoting the Job Network sites, and how easy it is for business to use the Job Network.

- Promoting the Job Network through the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, business breakfasts through out the state.
- Newspapers, and TEAC's newsletters . TEAC highlights a JN within each edition of the newsletter.

Promotion of the Job Network, forms part of the TEAC budget.

Indigenous Employment Facilitator.

TEAC has gained funding for the employment of an Indigenous Employment Facilitator to promote and work with Job Network Providers and the indigenous community to raise awareness of the Job Network within the indigenous community, promoting the STEPS program and wage assistance card. Cultural awareness training, is also being provided to JNM's to enable the identification of issues which JNM's may have in relation to understanding the culture within Tasmania of the community, and able to better relate "cultural issues" to employers.

From discussions and visits to Job Network providers – few JNM's have more than three or four indigenous clients registered. Investigations are being undertaken to determine reasons.

It is also being identified that many indigenous job seekers do not wish to use Wage Assistance Card".

STEPS program is working very well.

Coordination among the various Job Network players?

It appears under the second contract, that many of the JNM's are working together on some "projects" or in particular regional areas to ensure vacancies are filled. This is generally not spoken of within the JNM Partnerships committee, but within informal gatherings.

Job Network Providers in Tasmania are also Community Work Coordinators – so there is a vast networking opportunity across a range of areas.

With the recent collapse of the Ansett Call Centre in Launceston (400 employees), at least three of the Job Network providers, worked the first weekend to assist, and become involved in information sessions/expos with Centrelink and DEWRSB, providing assistance and guidance on the Job Network to Ansett employees.

The Job Network in Tasmania undertake their own advertising campaigns, and in some cases become closely aligned to "needy community organizations" ie Donating to a Medical Research Foundation.

2million dollars worth of employment within two weeks.

## Business understanding of Job Network.

There is still some confusion on what the Job Network does, what costs, who can access, and the level of satisfaction in providing the “right” person for the “job”.

Antidotal information only:

It is the Employment Consultant – “is known” – not so much as the *organization* they represent. (due to Tasmania’s size and the number of persons from the CES to the Job Network.)

That only low level positions are filled by the Job Network.

The cost factor is slowly disappearing.

The number of Job Network providers – choice – is an issue - slowly disappearing as there are many strong relationships established with JNM’s and businesses.

## Job Seekers

The choice provided; do they all offer the same;

the amount of paper work which has to be undertaken, when registering - should the job seeker register with a number of JNM’s

The lack of “experience”, “understanding” of some consultants to the job seeker.

They do not always have the same person “to case load” telling the same story over again.

Stories in the report “Walking in Dead Mans Shoes” undertaken by TASCROSS, Highlighted the plight on the long term unemployed, in 3 regional areas of state, accessing Centrelink and Job Network Providers.

## Performance Measures for Monitoring

From discussions at the Partnerships Meetings – there appears to be excellent arrangements in place by DEWRSB to monitor the role, responsibilities, compliance and outcomes of the Job Network providers. It appears “help” is available from both Centrelink and DEWRSB, and both organizations do their very best to meet the requirements of the JNM’s by providing direct telephone numbers to senior personnel, listening to problems, and getting back to the JNM’s within a short timeframe.

There are meetings established at operator levels with DEWRSB/Centrelink/JNM to ensure information is passed down, understood, and feedback given.

The “star” performance ratings for the larger JNM’s seems to be working well. The target marketing, to employers, and “being seen as a good corporate citizen” has certainly seen an increase.

The “star” rating for the very small providers - seems to making them feel inferior to the larger ones, and it is more difficult for them to improve within the “star” rating process.

### Improvements

From the information sessions on “Australians Working Together” with the impending changes to training credits, stronger emphasis on “assessment” of those with a “disability” (meaning that in broad context) to gaining employment, closer alignment of CDEP, and Work for Dole may assist in raising sustainable employment outcomes. TEAC is also looking to provide a training program for the JNM’s in the areas of disabilities, to gain a better understanding of “what a disability is” how to cope with a person with a disability” and what can and should be informed to the employer, and what backup to the employer is available.

It will be interesting to see the collaboration within the JNM’s or are RTO’s when the training credits are introduced, to ensure viable class sizes are established, their knowledge of “training” packages that are available, and the suitability of training offered.

TEAC is trying to address this within the JNM Partnerships meeting – in making JNM’s aware of the training available within industry sectors, and delivered by whom.

I would see a stronger role of the JNM’s within VET in Schools programs. JNM’s could develop a knowledge of the skills gained within the programs offered, for a more seamless approach to training, and employment opportunities.

Point made by TEAC Committee member.

Within the next Job Network tender an opportunity be given to “industry specific” providers. This is the case within group training, existence of specific organizations for recruitment within building and construction, and tourism, allowing for an excellent knowledge and servicing of specific industry areas.