



Central Ranges Local Learning &
Employment Network Inc.

Chairperson's Report 2009

2008 in Review

Welcome

Another 12 months has passed since our last Central Ranges LLEN AGM and I am sure you would agree that it is a period which we will not forget. We have had some wonderful outcomes for our young people, some real challenges and of course the devastation of the Victorian Bushfires which have and continue to have, a dramatic impact on our LLEN communities.

Let me take the opportunity on behalf of the CR LLEN Board to share some of the key higher level achievements, activities and challenges.

Importance of Relevant and Reliable Data

In 2008 we publicly distributed the "enhanced" environmental scan to members and stakeholders with over 1000 copies of the document being downloaded from our CR LLEN web site.

As a LLEN, we place enormous priority on accurate and meaningful data which provides the cornerstone for all our strategic planning and activities. This environmental scan provides the most detailed analysis of youth market trends available for our LLEN and I know is valued highly by many

Re-engagement - Our most Vulnerable

It is through this data that we can see some of the real outcomes of the partnerships between all of our stakeholders.

The long term trend data we have of disengaged and at risk youth across our 3 shires shows a *significant* and *sustained* reduction of 35% in this category of young people. When we look at this in terms of raw numbers, this means that compared to 2003, we have 156 *fewer* young people in the most vulnerable category, that is, young people who are living within our communities, but not in education, training or earning *any* income. Programs such as Community-based VCAL, VCAL, VET and SBNA's are having a great impact in our communities.

Koorie Communities

When it comes to data collection and monitoring appropriate planning for our Koorie Communities we have not done so well. We have seen some improvement in local data collection but this has not translated into meaningful outcomes for our young Koorie people. We need to address this and this has been targeted in our strategic planning going forward.

Partnerships

The LLEN plays a pivotal role of ensuring the different stakeholders across the education spectrum work together to ensure a better outcome for our young people. We have seen some real successes in this area. Of particular note:



Trade Training Centres

On 7 March 2008 Minister Pike, together with the Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard, wrote to all principals inviting applications for funding under the Commonwealth Government Trade Training Centres in Schools initiative.

The Central Ranges LLEN, in partnership with the South West Goulburn LCP Inc, Hume Region, Northern Metropolitan Region, Secondary Schools across the Government and Catholic sectors in the Mitchell, Murrindindi, Strathbogie and Whittlesea Shires and the Goulburn Ovens and Kangan Batman TAFEs, began investigating the possibility of a combined and coordinated capital investment application to support trade training for young people across what is broadly defined as the "Lower Hume or Central Ranges " region.

The Central Ranges Trade Training Centre (TTC) Consortium, with Broadford Secondary College as the lead school, successfully submitted its Expression of Interest to the Commonwealth Government in December 2008. Schools participating in this consortium currently include: Alexandra Secondary College, Assumption College Kilmore, Broadford Secondary College, Euroa Secondary College, Seymour Technical High School, Seymour Special School, St. Mary's P-10 Seymour, Wallan Secondary College, Whittlesea Secondary College and Yea High School.

I would like to thank and congratulate all involved across the different working groups for the ongoing commitment to partnering and teaming to develop the joint TTC application. Bill Coppinger, our LLEN CEO, has played a pivotal role in facilitating this process and it is a great example of the role LLEN's play in driving meaningful partnerships.



Industry Partnerships

Many of you will recall we signed a 3-Year MoU last year with Transfield Services [a long term partner] and it is very pleasing that this relationship is growing in strength, with a range of discussions at both regional and state level, investigating how long-term partnerships between business and government can be developed to improve education and employment outcomes in rural and regional communities such as ours. We are also taking a lead from Transfield Services and are looking to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan in 2009 and beyond, as well expanding the partnership to a whole of region multi-LLEN initiative.



Regional Youth Commitments

The CRLEN is working with both the Hume and Loddon Mallee regional offices of the the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to develop a region-wide Youth Commitment [as part of a state-wide strategy] with local implementation strategies involving all key service providers and agencies involved in education and training and career and transition support for young people aged 15-19 years.



Township 'Regeneration' Projects

The LLEN has been directly involved in contributing to and supporting a series of integrated "township" projects at different scales across Kyneton, Mitchell South, Seymour and Kinglake. These projects are progressing well and in some cases involve large scale planning reform and renewal of post compulsory pathways across our local government areas. The LLEN, through its stakeholder groups and understanding of key place based issues continues to make key contributions to these planning processes.

Communicating and Collaborating

I can not write a Chairs Report without specific mention of the CRLLEN website and related online resources.

In the preparation of this report the web site proved to be invaluable. It is a complete account of the activities of the LLEN since it was established in 2002. In 2008 our website surpassed its one millionth "page impression" and as at May 2009, is already in excess of 1.5 Million page impressions. We have over 370 subscribers in five countries.

I encourage you to utilise it to help fully inform you about LLEN strategy, activities, outcomes and importantly, what is happening in the education spectrum across our 3 shires. If you haven't already, visit the portal at

<http://www.centralrangesllen.org.au>

The Victorian Bushfires

Words can not describe the devastation the Victorian Bush Fires have caused to our communities across our LLEN. Black Saturday has impacted directly on the lives and work of many our Board members,. LLEN members and stakeholders.

As a LLEN we are in the process of reassessing our strategic plan going forward. There are many areas where LLEN can have a real impact on ensuring that the pathways for young people remain a priority and that there may be opportunities in the community reconstruction process where young people can play a significant and meaningful part.

In conclusion

At the conclusion of 2008 we ended a three year planning and funding cycle and we can be very proud of what collectively we have achieved I would like to sincerely thank the CR LLEN Board Members and the Administrative Committee for their time, expertise and input. We rely on our Board to connect with LLEN and community members in their sphere of influence to effect change, better practices, opportunities and outcomes for our young people.

I would also like to thank the many school leadership teams for their great support of the LLEN and their willingness to partner across boundaries to provide better outcomes for our students. We also have excellent working relationships with all three of our Local Government Areas and our two regional offices and thank them for support and expertise.

Lastly I would like to thank Bill Coppinger for his great efforts. As many of you will know, Bill and his family lost their home and contents on Black Saturday. It has been a very difficult time for Bill from a personal and work perspective and I would like to thank him for his professionalism in ensuring the operation of the LLEN has been maintained and that we have met key commitments.

We have many challenges moving forward but also opportunities to make a difference to the lives of young people. I hope you will continue to support and work with the LLEN to help us achieve this.



Andrew Hocking

Manager - Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs, IBM Australia New Zealand

Chairperson

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