



Central Ranges Local Learning & Employment Network Inc.

Incorporating Macedon Ranges, Mitchell & Murrindindi Shires

Acceptance Speech for Puckapunyal and Districts Community Partnership Program
Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership Awards
Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Salutation

1. **Prime Minister the Hon. John Howard, Chairperson**
2. **Senator the Hon. Kay Patterson Minister for Family and Community Services
and Deputy Chair**
3. **Partnership Members**
4. **Host**
5. **Ladies and gentlemen.**

Speech

It is indeed a great honour to accept this encouragement award on behalf of the Transfield Services, Central Ranges LLEN Seymour Community-Business Partnership.

This has truly been the establishment of a genuine partnership that meets my ideal of corporate social responsibility and the goals of the Prime Minister's awards.

Indeed, the **World Business Council on Sustainable Development**. defined Corporate Social responsibility as :

*“The **commitment** of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life.”* In the view of my organisation, and its 111 community members, Transfield Services has, and continues to demonstrate this commitment.



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The rural communities in which I live and work experience unique stresses as well as experiencing the difficulties many rural communities face. What was evident to my organisation from the outset of this proposed partnership, was a genuine commitment, right from the top of the organisation, to a partnership project focused on the mid to longer term needs of the community in which they operated. In my view, Transfield Services wished to make a genuine commitment to “raise the bar”.

This has become a 2-3 year commitment to work on a whole range of scales and with different groups, but above all else, the focus remains on what we call the ‘skill footprint’. These are activities that focus on improving the skills of those within our community and the longer-term sustainability of our towns and district. Of course no one project can achieve this alone, but already we believe we have raised set new standards and expectations within our community, that go beyond this one, albeit significant, project.

Such endeavours cannot exist without commitment, drive and obvious champions of the cause. On behalf of all involved, I thank Peter Watson, Chief Executive Officer, Neil Birtchnell, National Customer Service Manager and Rob Fiske, Industry Manager, Transfield Services.

My board also wishes to extend a special thanks to both Terry Collins, Puckapunyal Base Manager and Dr. John Prince for their personal drive and commitment at the “pointy end” of much of this work.



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Without the genuine relationships that have been formed, these partnerships would not exist. In June last year we sat in Terry Collins office at Puckapunyal and I cautioned how often such community-based projects can resemble someone trying to 'herd a mob of cats'. Terry Collins smiled and thought I was joking... I think he now realizes how serious I was. Thank-you Terry..

In closing I would like to recall the words of Dr. Michael E. Porter, Head of the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard University and recognized worldwide as one of the most influential thinkers in the field of regional competitiveness, sustainability and social progress. Professor Porter says that:

“Economic policy and social policy have been largely separate agendas, involving different participants. Many see the two as conflicting agendas. However, there is no inherent conflict between capitalism and social needs. A productive and growing economy requires rising skill levels, a proliferation of new companies, safe working conditions, healthy workers who live in decent housing in safe neighborhoods, and a sense of opportunity. Social and economic policy must be integrated in addressing society's ills and ensuring true progress”.

By conferring on our partnership, this encouragement award, I believe the Prime Minister has identified a community and business partner that is attempting to do just that.

Prime Minister on behalf of all our partners, thankyou for this great honour.

End of Statement

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