

## Conference Report

<b>ESITO Staff member name:</b>	Kevin White ISD Technical Advisor
<b>Conference Name:</b>	EE-OZ Training Standards Annual Conference 2009
<b>Purpose and theme:</b>	Electrotechnology & Energy Industries Australia – The Training Evolution
<b>Date of Conference and Venue:</b>	12-14 October 2009 – Stamford Grand, Adelaide, Australia
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p>The five drivers for workforce development in Australia are -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand for knowledge and skills</li> <li>• Skills Shortages</li> <li>• The Aging Workforce</li> <li>• New Technologies</li> <li>• Managing increasing demand whilst meeting regulatory, environmental and safety compliance requirements</li> </ul> <p>The role of “blended learning” in Australia is of interest to ESITO in the development of unit standards and training packages that incorporate both knowledge and skill outcomes. It also provides for uniformity throughout the country and a means of moderating delivery and assessment standards.</p> <p>Australia’s approach to the development of technician and technologist level training is maintaining a competency-based approach.</p> <p>The Training Package Resource Navigator would be helpful to ESITO and I am suggesting that we become a “subscribed member”</p> <p>This conference provides ESITO with an excellent opportunity to dialogue with our Australian counterparts and to draw ideas from a bigger pond.</p>
<b>Technical Advisory Committees:</b>	<p>On Monday I was able to sit in on two of the Technical Advisory Committees (TAC). The purpose of the TACs is to bring together technical experts (sector specific), with training and assessment expertise to provide the National Technical Advisory Group (NTAG-industry specific) with quality, nationally agreed, technical content advice relevant to each industry sector. The committees I attended were:</p> <p><b>Renewable/Sustainable Energy</b> – Australia has well developed qualifications for this sector and the developments occurring in this discipline are significant. They are currently struggling with workforce capability to achieve 56,000 new installations before the end of 2009. These RE/SE installations attract significant Federal Government subsidy. Contact with this committee enables us to maintain useful links to assist with NZ qualification developments in this discipline.</p>

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	<p><b>Test, Protection and Substations</b> – with the work we have almost completed in developing new level 4,5 and 6 unit standards for Power System Protection it was helpful to hear this groups discussion on where they are at and what they are doing. This is the discipline that EE-OZ has chosen to develop a blended learning package for and we will be able to benefit from this material.</p>
<p><b>Keynote addresses:</b></p>	<p>I was the second speaker at conference following the SA Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. After speaking for 40 minutes about ESITO’s challenge to develop workforce capability in an environment of technological change, I was questioned for 15 minutes by delegates. Most questions explored our approach to M-learning and wanted to know details about this. This was a new approach to learning and is not being done in Australia as yet. Bob Taylor, CEO of EE-OZ was particularly interested in this mode of delivery.</p> <p>Other questions related to solving the skills gap through immigration which has not worked well in Australia; upskilling from trades levels (Certificate) to technician levels (Diploma); intelligent-grid developments and workforce capability; training incentive schemes and the development of our strategic training plan.</p>
<p><b>Role of Blended Learning:</b></p>	<p>Gidley McCullagh (Director, Electrain) gave a very interesting account of Electrains work in developing e-learning programs for use in blended learning regimes. Blended learning refers to the use of both e-learning and face-to-face training to develop vocational competencies. E-learning is mainly employed to address theory and cognitive skills. Face-to-face training is used to develop practical skills.</p> <p>The EE-OZ has established a Blended Learning Project (BLP) which will concentrate initially concentrate on the Electricity Supply Industry Transmission and Distribution sectors. It is recognised that this sector is highly technical, regulated and continually changing. Ongoing workforce development and training is imperative for ensuring the safety of industry personnel, the community and network assets. There has also been recognition of the skill shortages at all levels being experienced by the industry.</p> <p>The advantages of blended learning are compelling as outlined below:</p> <p><b>Training Delivery</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equity of access - online programs are available to any (authorised) trainee at any time. They can reach far more people, far faster than any other training method, and return verifiable evidence of successful completion of the programs.</li> <li>• E-learning liberates trainees from the classroom and frees them to provide practical training in the field.</li> </ul> <p><b>Quality of Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-learning programs are quality controlled; they are complete, accurate and fit for purpose. .</li> <li>• The selective use of graphics, diagrams, animations and even video can help trainees to grasp difficult or abstract points.</li> </ul> <p>EE-OZ is leading the way in developing this type of material and making it available to industry. The first trial is developing material for the maintenance of substation equipment and is being funded by the Commonwealth Government. It is of particular interest to ESITO and I have arranged to get access to some of the trial versions through Electrain.</p>

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<p><b>Training packages and unit standards development:</b></p>	<p>EE-OZ is quite involved not only in the development of unit standards but in the development of National Training Packages through Industry Skills Councils and Registered Training Organisations. National Training Packages are a formal expression of work performance required of individuals in Industry and provide a uniform approach to the training content delivered at all tertiary training institutions. This provides an effective way to moderate training material on a national basis.</p> <p>Given that all Training Packages in Australia now include Units, Qualifications and Skill Sets; EE-Oz Training Standards considers the needs of industry in regard to all of these components when undertaking continuous improvement of its suite of Training Packages.</p> <p>A similar process to this is used in New Zealand by MITO. The training material produced by MITO is used by tertiary institutes throughout New Zealand and this maintains uniformity of delivery. This maybe something that ESITO should begin to explore.</p> <p>EE-OZ unit standards incorporate both knowledge based outcomes and skills outcomes. They refer to them as “Essential Knowledge and Associated Skills” (EKAS). The essential knowledge is taught at tertiary institutes’ (off-job) and the associate skills are taught on-job. The institutes’ are advised when the associate skill component is completed and process the credit registration.</p>
<p><b>Associate Diplomas and the Dublin Accord:</b></p>	<p>Associate diplomas in Australia are the equivalent of our National Diploma, or as recent IPENZ discussions suggest, New Zealand Diploma.</p> <p>In the light of the series of meetings contacted in New Zealand and arranged by IPENZ and ITP’s it was interesting to observe the Australian approach. This is being facilitated jointly by EE-OZ and the Engineers Institutes. It accepts the EKAS format of the EE-OZ unit standards and this has also been accepted as meeting the needs of the Dublin Accord. So, unlike New Zealand there is no attempt to separate the ‘on-job’ and ‘off-job’ training outcomes into two qualifications.</p>
<p><b>Training Package Resource Navigator:</b></p>	<p>The navigator provides access to over 100 products and resources for the Electrotechnology Training Package. In addition to these products additional material will be made available that supports the delivery of the Competency Standard Units (CSU’s).</p> <p>I am suggesting that this would be a great resource for us to obtain access to and we could approach EE-OZ to become a subscribed member.</p>
<p><b>Australasian Corrosion Association:</b></p>	<p>I arranged to meet with Ian Booth, CEO, Australasian Corrosion Association Inc who was in Adelaide at the time of the conference. This meeting was to confirm with him that we are very interested in utilizing their courses in the development of HV Line Construction personnel. He will be taking this to his board and will to confirm shortly that this will be possible and so that we can receive material to enable us to write unit standards based on their courses. I reiterated that this is not being done so that any training provider in NZ could deliver the courses. This would remain as the right of ACA. We merely want to register satisfactory completion of their courses on the NZ Qualifications Framework.</p>
<p><b>Website links related to this report:</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.ee-oz.com.au/content/">http://www.ee-oz.com.au/content/</a>  <a href="http://www.electrain.com.au/">http://www.electrain.com.au/</a>  <a href="http://www.corrosion.com.au/">http://www.corrosion.com.au/</a></p>

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