

Project ID No.	CP 382 / 2 / 1 / 37
GOAL	4 SUB-PROGRAM

Effective Networking Communities of Practice

Action plans must be submitted online to www.reframingthefuture.net by COB Tuesday 20 June 2006.

Please refer to 'How to submit an action plan online' in the Reframing the Future handout or on the website.

All sections must be completed.

Please note: sections 1 – 9 of this document will be uploaded onto the Reframing the Future website. Details of participants in item 11 will be only be used in accordance with our privacy policy and will not be published on the website.

Name of organisation funded by Reframing the Future

TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute (SWSI)
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1. Convenor's details

Name: Thor Morris		
Position: Manager, Business & Operations Aeroskills & Automotive Faculty		
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2. Facilitators' details

Name: Selection in progress –will confirm details of Facilitator to Reframing the Future by July 17th		
Address:		
City/Suburb:	Postcode:	
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3. Project overview (100 words maximum)

This project will establish a community of practice that will work in collaboration with relevant industry parties to enhance Aeroskills education provision on a National basis.

The Project is a joint enterprise that will allow the community of practice to develop into a unifying communication medium and play a key role in expanding and reinforcing current collaborative arrangements between the RTO's, supporting the implementation of the national training system.

The project will create and disseminate tacit knowledge regarding the realignment of Australia's Aeroskills regulations, allowing the participating RTO's to develop a better understanding and shared repertoire of the proposed changes and prepare them to positively respond to any challenges once the changes are introduced.

4. Domain of knowledge

What aspects of the national training system will be addressed by your project?

(e.g. establishing relationships with industry clients; improving workplace assessment or delivery; implementing new Training Packages) (Please add rows as required)

Aspects of the national training system that will be addressed by this project include:

- Building on and enhancing existing relationships between Aeroskills RTO's, the industry regulator and their industry clients to better meet industry's training needs.
- Engaging in the broader conversations taking place around the changes to the current Aeroskills regulations in preparation for the subsequent impact this will have on the national training system with respect to delivering Aeroskills qualifications
- Active participation in the current Aeroskills Training Package review.

5. Facilitating your community of practice

Please describe how you propose to facilitate your group progressing through the stages of growth of a Community of Practice (see Table 4.1 in the report: *The Potential for Communities of Practice to underpin the National Training Framework*):

This project will use McDermott's ten critical success factors for building and sustaining this community of practice (McDermott, 2000:4).

1. *Focus on knowledge important to both the business and the people.* This project will focus on a key driver behind all the participants' business – Australian Aeroskills Regulations and the current review of these regulations.
2. *Find a well-respected community member to act as coordinator.* The coordinator for the expanded community of practice will be a well known and widely respected educational manager that has already worked with many of the participants over many years.
3. *Make sure people have time and encouragement to participate.* As part of this submission, SWSI has written to all the intended participant organisations. With only two exceptions, all of these organisations have agreed to make appropriate senior staff available throughout the project (up to 5 days in total per participant). The two exceptions are small RTO's that would have difficulty having senior staff away, these two organisations still want to participate, but in a less active role.
4. *Build on a core value of the organization.* The Aeroskills industry in Australia prides itself on the quality and competence of their staff, underpinned by the industry's regulations. This project directly relates to this core value.
5. *Involve thought leaders.* This project builds on a network that already exists and has at its core key players from the Industry Regulator – CASA who have important specialised knowledge and the Industry Skills Council - Manufacturing Skills Australia.
6. *Create forums for thinking & 7. Maintain personal contact among community members.* This project will facilitate live contact between the members as well as providing resources to enable the coordinator to visit community members; key elements McDermott cites to building a sense of commonality, enthusiasm and trust amongst the community.
8. *Develop an active, passionate core group.* This Community of Practice already has core group of what McDermott would describe as "high contributors". This group came together last year to undertake an assessment validation project. During this project the participants (QANTAS, CASA, RMIT, Kangan Batman, SWSI) realised that a wider cross section of RTO's and Industry

representatives were needed to discuss and act on identified issues. To this end this core group agreed to expand the membership to become a community of practice.

9. *Make it easy to connect, contribute to and access the community.* & 10. *Create real dialogue about cutting edge issues in community forums.* This project will focus creating and facilitating an environment where participants can openly discuss problems and share ideas with the initial focus on contributing to the debate regarding current and future Australian Aeroskills Regulations.

6. Structuring your community

Please describe how you propose to support the development of the three components of your community: its domain of knowledge, community and practice (see *Effectively Structuring Communities of Practice in VET*):

Domain of Knowledge

Domain of Knowledge was established at a two day Aeroskills RTO forum in February 2006 between all NTIS registered Aeroskills RTO's in Australia, CASA and Manufacturing Skills Australia. The forum established the need to:

- Build and enhancing existing relationships between Aeroskills RTO's, the industry regulator and their industry clients to better meet industry's training needs.
- Engage in the broader conversations taking place around the changes to the current Aeroskills regulations in preparation for the subsequent impact this will have on the national training system with respect to delivering Aeroskills qualifications
- Actively participate in the current Aeroskills Training Package review.

The domain of knowledge will continue to develop as the community of practice matures.

Community

During the February 2006 Aeroskills RTO forum, all participants agreed on the value they had derived from the forum. At this point it was mooted to the assembled members they were in fact a community of practice but only at the "coalescing stage" of development (Mitchell & Wood, 2001:6) and would greatly benefit if it were able to move into the "Active stage" (ibid). This project will provide the required leadership and resources to overcome the barriers of distance and facilitate the process of engaging and focusing this group's effort into an active community of practice.

Practice

The Project is a joint enterprise that will allow the community of practice to develop into a unifying communication medium and play a key role in expanding and reinforcing current collaborative arrangements between the RTO's, supporting the implementation of the national training system.

The project will create and disseminate tacit knowledge regarding the realignment of Australia's Aeroskills regulations, allowing the participating RTO's to develop a better understanding and shared repertoire of the proposed changes and prepare them to positively respond to any challenges once the changes are introduced.

7. Anticipated outcomes (see Chapters 6-7 of *The Potential*)

Please describe the outcomes anticipated as a result of your project:

for participating individuals	Foster trust and a sense of common purpose across an increased network of contacts. The ability to source the skills and expertise of others within the community. Increased knowledge of changes within the industry and subsequent impact on training provision. Enable the individuals to develop a better understanding and shared repertoire of the proposed changes.
for participating organisations	Increased opportunity for alliances and partnerships. Enable organisations to develop a better understanding and shared repertoire of the Industry and proposed changes. Strategically prepare for upcoming change.

8. Evaluation

Please provide an outline of the methods you will use to evaluate the participants' learning and your project's efficiency and effectiveness.

The project will evaluate its effectiveness against the projects three goals

1. How far has the project progressed in moving the existing Aeroskills community of practice from the "Coalescing stage" into the "Active stage" (Mitchell & Wood, 2001;6)?
2. How well the Project is working as a unifying communication medium and facilitating collaborative arrangements between the RTO's?
3. Have the participating RTO's developed a better understanding and shared repertoire of the proposed changes and prepared themselves to positively respond to identified challenges?

To enable this evaluation against the project goals, evidence will be gathered as part of an ongoing process throughout the project and evaluated at three junctures;

Beginning: Will form a benchmark or starting point from which all progress can be measured.

Evidence to be used: Participant answers to short open ended written questions.

Midpoint: Will provide feedback to members regarding project progress and a chance to celebrate achievements and refocus on what still needs to be achieved. Will allow project members to re-evaluate thinking and goals and make adjustments to keep the project on track.

Evidence to be used: How many of the participants are actively participating and contributing, participant answers to short open ended written questions, what issues have been identified and how they are being dealt with.

End: Will evaluate the overall effectiveness of the project. Allow project achievements to be communicated and celebrated by all participants and to their member organisations. Provides the group with greater insight into the challenges it faced and how the group responded. Elicit ongoing support for the community of practice by the participants' organisations and assist with identifying future project opportunities.

Evidence to be used: How many of the participants are actively participating and contributing, participant answers to short open ended written questions, what issues were identified and what impact did the group have on these issues.

The evaluation process will be undertaken by a sub-group of the community of practice with most of the sub-group members coming from the core group. Time will be set aside for this team to meet, reflect on the evidence and formulate findings. Findings will then be written up and discussed with the whole group. Mid point findings and End point findings will be written up into a formal report for distribution to member organisations senior management and Reframing the Future.

9. Project timeframe

Please list project milestones and key dates

(Please add rows as required)

Milestone	Key date
Meeting of core group	July 21st
Forum 1	August 4th
Meeting of sub-group to evaluate and report on project progress for mid term report	August 25th
Forum 2	September 8th
Forum 3	October 27th
Meeting of core group to evaluate community's future directions followed by meeting of sub-group to evaluate and report on project outcomes for final report	November 24th