THE IMPACT OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING REFORM AGENDA AND
WORKPLACE
REARRANGEMENT ON STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN AUSTRALIAN
ACADEMIC AND STATE LIBRARIES

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for any other degree in any university.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference is given in the text.

This thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies, appendices and footnotes.

Signature .............................................................................................
GLOSSARY

Abilities Capacities, such as making judgements, asking questions and posing problems, which are important in successful performance of some professional tasks.

Attitudes Personal qualities of dispositions, such as patience, persistence and compassion, which are important in successful performance of some professional tasks.

Attributes The knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes that together underlie competent professional performance.

Australian Committee on Training Curriculum A former standing committee of VEETAC with responsibility for developing national curriculum projects covering on-the-job and off-the-job training conducted by all training providers. Incorporated from July 1995 into the Standards and Curriculum Council within Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).

Australian Education Council (AEC) Replaced by MCEETYA

Australian Standards Framework (ASF) A set of eight competency levels which serve as benchmarks for the development and recognition of competency standards in relation to work classifications and occupations across Australian economy. Developed by the National Training Board with the first version released in January 1991.
Award restructure

- The process of changing existing awards to improve efficiency and meet the needs of industry.

- The provision of better opportunities for workers in the industry.

Award restructure negotiation processes may look at such issues as:

- simplification or broad banding classification structures to provide better career opportunities for multi-skilling;

- flexibility in hours, modes of employment; and

- identifying needs and assess to training.

Competence

Possessing the attributes enabling performance of a range of professional tasks to the appropriate standards.

Competency

A combination of attributes underlaying some aspects of successful professional performance. Competencies vary from specific to complex (or higher level).

Competency Standards Bodies

Organisations which have been formally approved by the National Training Board to:

- liaise with industry in the development of competency standards;

- present proposed standards to the NTB for endorsement; and

- carry out reviews of standards.

Competency-based standards

Levels of achievement required for competence in key areas of professional practice.
Competency-based training (CBT) refers to a competency-based approach to vocational education and training. It focuses on the competencies gained by an individual rather than on the training process itself.

Competent A competent professional has the attributes necessary for job performance to the appropriate standards.

Core skills Those skills which are common in a wide range of tasks and which are essential for competence in those tasks.

Enterprise A certified agreement between management and unions within an organisation to restrictive industrial awards and work organisations.

Industry competency standard Refers to a group of units of competency that expresses, at a minimum, the requirements to be competent at particular ASF levels, and, at a maximum, the requirements for all ASF levels linked together in a career path in that industry. They are developed by recognised CSBs.

Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) Autonomous industry-based bodies with membership representing employer and employee associations and government. There are national and state ITABs which:

- are involved in the establishment of skills standards and recognition of skills against competency standards;
- provide channels for communication between industry and government; and
- market and promote training.
Key competencies: Those competencies essential for effective participation in the emerging patterns of work and work organisations. They are generic and focus on the capacity to apply knowledge and skills in an integrated way in work situations.

Ministerial Council on Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) is a cross sectional intergovernmental ministerial forum, encompassing all sectors of education and training, as well as policies for employment and youth affairs.

Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) Replaced by MCEETYA.

Multi-skilling: Broadening the range of tasks which a worker may be required to perform.

National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) is a set of principles, endorsed by agreement between the Prime Minister, Premiers and Ministers for Vocational Education in Australia 1992. NFROT ensures national consistency in the recognition of:

- accredited courses;
- competencies;
- training programs;
- training providers; and
- prior learning of individuals.

Since 1995 responsibility for the implementation of NFROT has been vested in the Standards and Curriculum Council.

National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) was established in 1989 within the Department of Employment, Education and Training as part of the Commonwealth Government’s multicultural agenda. The role of NOOSR has been extended to encouraging the development of competency standards by the professionals (ASF levels 7 and 8). In this capacity NOOSR provides advice and assistance to professionals where education and training is predominantly delivered by self-accrediting higher education institutions.
Until 1985 when its functions were incorporated into the Standards and Curriculum Council, a public company whose owners were the Commonwealth, State and Territory ministers responsible for vocational education, employment and training (VET). The owner-members appointed a board of directors with tripartite representation from government, industry and the unions. The function of the Board included:

- assisting industry to define and develop national competency standards for occupations and classifications in industry or enterprise awards or agreements;
- endorsing competency standards developed by industry;
- maintaining and publishing registers of competency standards, accredited courses and registered providers; and
- reporting to VET ministers on matters relevant to its function.

Performance What professionals do as they go about their work.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Involves the determination on an individual basis of the competencies obtained by a learner through previous formal training, work experience and/or life experience and consequent advanced standing to which the learner is entitled in a training course.

Registered Industry Training Agent (RITA) Suitably qualified persons who have been registered by the NTB to advise employers on whether a training program is an eligible expenditure under Training Guarantee.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Behavioural aspect of successful professional performance in which practised facility is required. Ranges from manual to interpersonal skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills audit</td>
<td>A systematic process which identifies the present stock of skills or competencies held by the workforce (whether or not they are been activity used) and/or the skills and competencies that are needed in the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Is a statement in outcome terms of what is expected of an individual performing a particular occupational role. It may be expressed in two parts:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• an ‘element’ of competence which describes what the individual should be able to do;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• performance criteria which describes the standards of performance required for the successful achievement of the element of competence (NTB, 1990).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>Levels of achievement required for performance to be judged competent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards and Curriculum Council</td>
<td>Established within ANTA in July 1995. Incorporates the functions of NTB, ACTRAC and NFROT and will increase industry capacity to deal with funding and training quality assurance issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>A fairly discrete unit of professional work. Tasks usually can be further divided into sub-tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>In Australia, usually refers to award courses, training programs and other opportunities for skill acquisition, formal and informal, that are related to vocational outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Training Guarantee

The Training Guarantee legislation was introduced by the Commonwealth Government in July 1990 with a view to improving the efficiency of Australian industry both the level and quality of training in Australia. The Training Guarantee levy was set each year at a percentage of an employer’s annual national payroll. This amount was the minimum an employer is expected to spend on the enforcement of training during that year. In 1993 a two year moratorium on the enforcement of the Training Guarantee was announced. It is still currently in suspension (1996).

Vocational

Two uses are common:

- vocational training that teaches the technical skills required to do a specific range of jobs; and

- vocational education which also includes the underlying or transferable skills which equip people for employment and mobility within the workforce.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the survey respondents, who gave so generously of both their time and their expertise. Particular thanks are due to those respondents who agreed to be interviewed thereby providing much needed qualitative insights to the quantitative data gathered by the questionnaire.

I deeply appreciate the committed work of my research assistants who worked on aspects of this study under my supervision. Kylie McIndoe, Mary Russell, Christine Mason and Derek Bridgland deserve special mention for their unfailing support, encouragement and advice. I am also grateful to the colleagues, who trialed the questionnaire, and presented me with constructive criticism and to my co-workers for their endurance.

Finally, to my supervisor, Professor Brian Caldwell, my gratitude for his faith in my ability to achieve, and for his unfailing patience and guidance.
ABSTRACT

In Australia, the combination of a changing workforce profile, the changing nature of work and industrial agreements and the changing role of education and training gave rise to the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA). The main aim of the NTRA is to increase the competitiveness and productivity of Australian industry through industry responsive reform of the vocational education and training system. The development of a National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) and nationally endorsed industry competency standards, along with The Training Guarantee Act (1990), were intended to ensure that the Government’s major reform program for education and training for Australian industry took effect.

The context for the study is established with a review of policy and the literature pertaining to national training reform issues, workplace rearrangement, and staff development as it relates to libraries. Four research questions guided the study and data to address these questions were sought in three ways. Two national surveys of Australian academic and state libraries were undertaken a year apart; documents were examined, for example, staff development policy documents, and interviews were conducted, both to elaborate on survey data and to explore interviewees’ meaning of the term, “staff development” through a phenomenological analysis.

The study updates developments and expressions of public opinion on aspects of both the NTRA and workplace rearrangement in Australia as recorded in the literature, and
outlines progress in workplace rearrangement and impact of award restructuring and competency standards on staff development in academic and state libraries

The study found that workplace rearrangement has had some effect on staff development and human resources management in the survey libraries. The two key findings were that 1) multi-skilling which arose from the Structural Efficiency Principle and which was a major part of award restructuring, was embraced enthusiastically and that 2) the recognition of experience as well as formal qualifications in restructured awards has opened up alternative career path options for library technicians in the respondent libraries. There is also a small amount of evidence that TGA has resulted in increased funding and improved record keeping for staff development in some respondent libraries. The NTRA, however, has had the least obvious impact. There was no evidence of the principles for the national recognition of training being used in staff development programs and little understanding of the nature and purpose of industry competency standards. Possible reasons for the slow uptake of this reform are offered.

Concluding the study is a discussion of the challenges facing library managers against the broader national economic and management context. Recommendations for practice and reflections on the methodology are offered and suggestions for further research conclude the study.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In 1988, the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission (now the Australian Industrial Relations Commission) handed down an historic wage case, historic in that it established a structural efficiency principle (SEP) designed to help reform the Australian labour market. Education and training were seen to be critical to increasing the international competitiveness of Australian industry. Australian industrial awards were to be overhauled (restructured) to remove outmoded provisions and to make them more relevant and appropriate to the needs of modern industry and its workers. The three priorities of the restructuring process were to revise job classification structures, to multi-skill the workforce and, by bringing about major reforms to skill formation and training arrangements, to provide new career paths for employees.

The SEP which underpinned award restructuring required unions and employers to reach agreement on measures to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their industries. These measures included establishing skill-related career paths which provided an incentive for employees to continue to participate in skill formation; eliminating impediments to multi-skillling and broadening the range of tasks required of an employee; and ensuring that working patterns and arrangements enhanced the flexibility and efficiency of the industry. These momentous changes in the Australian industrial arena were paralleled by changes in the profile of the Australian workforce and the nature of its work, and the development of a National Training Reform Agenda, driven
by the federal government and designed to complement award restructuring as a micro-economic reform strategy.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of large scale industrial change, with its underpinning economic and educational imperatives, on staff development in Australian academic and state libraries. More specifically, the study addresses three questions:

1. What are the differences between academic and state libraries in their responses to award restructuring, competency standards and staff development policies and procedures?
2. What are the geographic differences in the responses of state and academic libraries to award restructuring, competency standards and staff development policies and procedures?
3. What factors influence the design of staff development in academic and state libraries?

This chapter outlines the purpose, significance, methodological approaches, scope and organisation of the thesis.
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Changing Profile of the Australian Workforce and the Changing Nature of Work

During the last decade, Australia accelerated its participation in the global economy. Banking was deregulated, the Australian dollar was floated (1983), tariff protection is in the process of being dismantled and the labour market has begun to be deregulated. There has been a shift away from a preoccupation with what can be made or dug out of the ground to a focus on what people and other countries want to buy.

As we hear relentlessly in the media, Australia is not doing well in adjusting to being a world player. Our share of world exports is lower now than it was 30 years ago! Our international debt has grown 16 fold in the last 12 years and our per capita income ranking has dropped from 4th highest in the world in 1960 to 16th highest today. The only way to reverse our declining fortunes is to produce more goods and services that successfully meet the needs of customers, both in Australia and other countries.

(Carmody, 1993, p. 7)

The nature of work and the way we do it are not the only change. The composition of the Australian labour force has changed dramatically over the past two decades from a predominantly male, full-time, relatively low skilled, workforce concentrated in the traditional manufacturing, infrastructure development, commerce and transport industry sectors, to a workforce that is increasingly part-time, 58% male and 42% female, and where employment is concentrated in the service sector (ABS Australian Social Trends 1994, ABS Catalogue No. 4102.0, p. 106).
Career paths are changing. Lifetime linear progression with one employer is becoming a rarity amongst men (it has never been a pattern amongst women). People’s careers will more likely be characterised by several organisational changes, moving away from original training, partly to meet the need for broad experience and partly because of the elimination of layers of management. The percentage of the workforce who are contractors or consultants, casuals or part-timers is likely to continue to rise.

In Australia since 1974, the services sector has greatly expanded and diversified, and there has been an increasing polarity between information or knowledge-related employment requiring high skill levels, on the one hand, and personal, domestic and hospitality services-related employment requiring low skill levels, on the other. These two areas have been difficult to track in the existing statistical classifications of employment produced by the Department of Employment, Education and Training and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

In the report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee for Long Term Strategies, Australia as an Information Society: Grasping New Paradigms (1991, p.5), the Committee noted the inadequacy of this form of industry classification which disguised the high proportion of information related occupations in the services sector. This sector deserves classification on its own - “quaternary” in OECD nomenclature - because the old tertiary definition for undifferentiated services has now become virtually meaningless. The report detailed an OECD form of industry classification which included a fourth, information sector. According to this analysis, information related employment amounted to 42.5% in 1993. Categories included information production
(including scientific, technical, creative and consultative services, market research services), information processing (including administrative and managerial services, clerical and financial services and process control and supervision), and information distribution (including education and communication services). The library and information industry, traditionally seen as a service industry, fits comfortably within this information sector and contributes to all three categories, particularly information processing and distribution.

The trend towards the information and personal services sectors as the mainstream sources of employment in Australia has had important consequences for the labour market in the area of skills formation. There is relatively high demand for skilled and professional workers and relatively low demand for unskilled workers. Not only are skills essential, but the ability to acquire new skills quickly and adapt to rapidly changing conditions of work, are crucial attributes of today's workforce. The library and information industry comprises skilled and professional workers, the majority of whom are women.

In some respects, the library and information industry has been ahead of this changing profile in that during the last twenty years it has employed more women than men (80% to 20%), many of whom work part-time. The industry has always been knowledge or information-based and has required high skill levels. Thus one could argue that the degree to which the increased emphasis on skill development and training required by award restructuring and the National Training Reform Agenda might not be as marked in the library and information industry. Whilst the restructuring of the higher education
and state public service awards (the awards relevant to this study) was intended, among other things, to multi-skill employees and to help them cope better with change, many workers in the library industry were already multi-skilled. This study would indicate whether or not there was any evidence to support this belief.

**Changing Role of Education and Training**

In the environment described above, Australia’s existing vocational training and apprenticeship arrangements were seen to perpetuate the rigidities of the traditional craft system. Given the pace of technological and process change in the workplace, skills now have to be acquired quickly by means of training programs tailored to particular competency requirements and supplemented by well designed, properly delivered on-the-job training as required.

The development of the appropriate workforce skills is a key factor in the economic growth of a nation. The previous federal government’s white paper, *Working Nation*, concludes that:

> skill and knowledge are critical elements of competitive advantage in modern economies. The quality and availability of education provides Australia with a distinct advantage in the region (May 1994, p.72).

The Government believes that Australia is already well placed with a highly skilled workforce and flexible skills base but more needs to be done as increases in productivity depend on the skills and application of people through education and training (ibid, p.10). Australia needs education and training that is cost effective, high quality and user-friendly (Clare and Johnston, 1993, p.9).
Education enhances performance throughout the workforce by improved literacy skills, work skills and knowledge, improved problem solving abilities, adaptability to change and the acquisition of appropriate values and ethics (Clare and Johnston, p.54). Greater increases in productivity result in organisations which encourage multiskilling and are creative and adaptable (Young People’s Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training, 1991, p.7). Australia’s post-industrial economy has become more reliant on a skilled workforce which has led employers, employees and governments to place pressure on the education sector to provide training and retraining which are appropriate to Australia’s competitive needs. Factors which necessitate increased training include technological change, quality assurance and organisational restructuring. The previous federal Labor Government’s strategy was to ensure that:

- young people have adequate training and education to enter the workforce; and
- the training system is responsive to the varied and changing needs of the labour market (Working Nation, p.10).

There have been a number of recent reports on the potential policy directions for Australian education. Reports such as the (then) Department of Education, Employment and Training’s Australia’s Workforce in the Year 2001; the Australian Education Council Review Committee’s Young People’s Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training; the Employment and Skills Formation Council’s Raising the Standard: Middle Level Skills In the Australian Workforce and its The Shape of Things to Come: Small Business Employment and Skills; the Wiltshire report on the Review of the National Board of Employment, Education and Training; and the EPAC report, Education and Training in the 1990s.
Issues highlighted in these reports include the need for a convergence between general education and vocational training, the development of national generic or core competencies, an emphasis on quality as well as quantity, a more accessible transition from the compulsory education system to the vocational skills training programs and the sharing of responsibilities. Many of these issues and recommendations have already been addressed and/or implemented through the National Training Reform Agenda, part of which established the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET). Through NBEET, industry and unions are involved in specifying the essential elements of certain skills and in training and retraining processes. The recent review of the Board by Wiltshire (1994) made a number of recommendations to improve its effectiveness.

**Generic Competencies - an international comparison**

Amongst the latest developments to make significant impact on the educational scene worldwide are ‘generic competencies’. The acquisition of these competencies by the general population, and particularly the emerging workforce, is seen as essential for the development and maintenance of the workforce, to enable sustained and improved economic performance in an increasingly competitive global environment. Differences in the definition of generic competencies occur between countries, resulting in different lists of what are considered to be generic competencies. One of the main characteristics of generic competencies which is treated differently between countries is transferability, that is, whether or not a generic competency taught and learned in one context or environment automatically transfers to another context or environment. Introducing
generic competencies in curricula also poses new problems in relation to assessment procedures and relationships to existing educational standards frameworks.

A number of names have been used in reference to generic competencies including ‘key competencies’ in Australia, ‘essential skills’ in New Zealand, ‘foundation skills’ or ‘workplace competencies’ in the United States, and ‘core skills’ in England, Scotland, Wales and Germany. In Germany, these were developed as part of the Project and Transfer Oriented Training Project (PETRA), and identified core skills required by specialists over and above technical ones (Siemens, 1990). The terms ‘transferable skills’, ‘transition skills’, ‘enabling skills’, ‘basic skills’ and ‘core competencies’ have also been used in reference to generic skills (Werner, 1995).

In Australia, the development of key competencies, along with other overseas generic competency developments, has emerged primarily to address the requirements of a modern workforce and to ensure that people are equipped to participate effectively in modern society. These competencies for each country are strikingly similar. All cover the areas of communication; collecting, analysing and organising information; planning and organisation; interpersonal and social skills; numeracy skills; problem solving; and technological skills. The development of the Australian key competency ‘cultural understanding’ is unique, in that no other country has specifically developed this as a generic competency in its own right, although other countries’ generic skills do cover many of the aspects identified in this key competency. On the other hand, Australia’s list of key competencies has no equivalent of the United Kingdom’s ‘modern foreign language’ core skill or New Zealand’s ‘physical skills’ essential skill. However, during
the development of the Australian key competencies, the Mayer Committee did indicate that languages other than English may, in the future, warrant inclusion in the list of key competencies.

Although industry in Australia argued strongly for the development of attitudes and values as a key competency, this idea was rejected by the Mayer Committee in developing the key competencies. This outcome is similar to that in the United Kingdom where, despite industry recommending the adoption of values, integrity and a positive attitude to change as core skills, neither the National Curriculum Council, National Council for Vocational Qualifications, nor the Schools Examinations and Assessment Council included these suggestions in their proposed lists of core skills.

Each country developing generic competencies has generally identified a single list of generic competencies except for the United States’ workplace know-how, which comprises five competencies and a three-part foundation, competence being required in the foundation before competence can be achieved in any of the five competencies (Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, 1991).

In Australia and New Zealand, all the generic competencies are deemed to be fundamental to all occupations and thus essential for everyone to acquire. However, in the United Kingdom, only the communication, problem-solving and personal skills competencies are seen to be relevant to all National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), whilst the numeracy, information technology and modern foreign language core skills are seen to be relevant to only particular NVQs where necessary for occupational competence.
Transferability is one of the areas least clearly discussed with respect to generic competencies. Although most developers of generic competencies desire their transferability to be maximised, they are becoming increasingly aware that their transferability from one context to another cannot be assumed. As a result, transferability is increasingly viewed as a desired outcome of generic competency acquisition rather than a definitional requirement.

The way generic competencies are to be delivered in the curriculum appears to be similar for all countries developing generic competencies, in that they will be integrated into existing subjects - generic competencies will not be taught as subjects in their own right. The future of generic competency development depends on the successful introduction of assessment and reporting systems and structures which are still being developed. A concern here is the extra workload for teachers and administrators. Another problem is to ensure national consistency in reporting, particularly in countries such as Australia where each State and Territory will develop its own method of assessing and reporting the key competencies (Werner, 1995, p. 55).

It remains to be seen whether the reporting and assessment of generic competencies will be successful in identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the skill development of the population. Once weaknesses have been identified, it will be another challenge to rectify these to achieve the result which first prompted the development of generic competencies - better economic performance.

The period during which this study has taken place has witnessed the impact of all the issues listed above on the library and information industry. As the body responsible for
the recognition of professional and library technician courses in Australia, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) has been deeply concerned to ensure that courses which it recognises are able to meet rigorous standards and criteria whilst at the same time ensuring that courses are responsive to marketplace needs. The ALIA was also aware that it needed to be involved in the development of the industry’s competency standards if the standards were to be treated seriously or given any credibility by the industry as tools to design relevant training delivery. To date, the use of the competency standards for the basis of training delivery has not extended to first award, professional library and information courses. From the beginning of 1996, however, diploma courses preparing library technicians through the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector, are based on the industry’s competency standards. There is also a glimmering of interest in the use of the standards as the basis of delivering on-the-job training as well, as reported at two recent national conferences on library and information competency standards (Enterprise, Employment, Education: The Library Workforce in the 1990s, 1995 and Future Challenge, Future Change: the National Library Competency Standards Conference, 1996 ). At the time the two surveys in this study were undertaken, the industry competency standards had not been developed. There was, however, widespread knowledge that competency standards were imminent. This study sought to examine the level of understanding of competency standards and how they might relate to staff development and training.
Workplace Rearrangement

Workplace rearrangement (award restructuring and enterprise bargaining) was seen by both the Australian Labor Government and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) to be integral to Australia’s microeconomic reform as it would pave the way for more efficient work practices and hasten the implementation of new technologies.

The 1980s led to a period of constructive changes to the Australian economy and industrial relations initiatives. These changes included:

- the restructuring of industrial awards to provide fewer job classifications, broader functions, reduced demarcation, career structures and improved skill development arrangements;
- an emphasis on productivity issues at an industry and enterprise level as a basis for wage negotiation;
- financial deregulation in certain industries, for example, electricity supply and telecommunications;
- the restructuring of the union movement to provide for fewer but larger unions;
- the re-orientation of manufacturing industries towards value added activity and export markets; and
- the realisation of the need to update the national vocational education and training system.

In terms of wage policy, the 1980s were marked by a centralised wage system which, during the first half of the decade, delivered wage increases based upon price changes to virtually all workers covered by Federal and State Awards. The ability to make
adjustments to wage rates or working conditions at an industry or enterprise level outside a tightly written set of wage principles was almost non-existent. In the second half of the 1980s, the centralised wage system was maintained but outcomes were determined by the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) in terms of increases which could be achieved as a result of productivity bargaining at Award level. As most awards were industry based rather than enterprise based, there was little scope for enterprise bargaining around pay and productivity issues. In addition, after the industry bargaining process was finalised, the outcome was subject to scrutiny by the IRC to determine whether the employer and union agreement complied with prescribed wage principles. The wage system of the eighties reached a point where few parties were satisfied with it.

From the union perspective the failure of the system to maintain living standards, whilst imposing difficult tests on unions to justify wage increases at an Award level plus the much higher overall movement in unregulated incomes of managers, the self-employed and professionals, led to a virtual rejection in 1991 of a continuation by the IRC of its central role in national wage fixing. (Mansfield, 1993, p. 10).

Thus, the *Industrial Relations Reform Act 1993* emphasises enterprise bargaining for wage fixing and workplace reform. Awards can place restrictions on the utilisation of labour such as hours of work. Enterprise bargaining agreements also can address issues such as the flexibility of working hours, job redesign, multiskilling, new classification structures, quality assurance systems and so on. Unions, government and employers agreed that technology and finance were more mobile than the population and would move elsewhere unless Australia could make the most of its workforce to improve economic productivity.
Labour market reform was and is a key ingredient of the federal government’s strategy to make Australian industry more productive, more competitive and more capable of generating longer term economic growth while at the same time expanding opportunities for individual workers and improving the quality of work life. The SEP, more commonly known as award restructuring, required unions and employers to reach agreement on measures to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their industry. Awards were seen as being restrictive, too narrowly defined in tasks assigned to different classification levels and with training needs aligned with the award rather than industry. Dawkins (1988, p.10) recognised these issues:

> Awards can also reflect the traditional forms of work organisation that emphasise narrow or rigidly defined occupational classifications. Where classifications required limited job training, flexibility and skill formation can be inhibited. The constraints on an employer’s ability to deploy and utilise skilled labour efficiently will tend to reduce the returns to the firm from investment in skills acquisition and thus reduce the level of training investment they are willing to undertake.

In theory, some of the problems arising from award classifications and other restrictions arising from awards have been addressed by the process of award restructuring and subsequently by enterprise bargaining. SEP meant that everyone in the workforce who was subject to an award was required to undergo continual training throughout their career if they wish to progress to higher salary/wage levels. In Australia the potential exists for large numbers of people to enter training courses over the next few years and many will stay in training for considerable periods over their working life and this includes people working in the library and information industry.
The Need for Change (May 1989), the interim report of the Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC), marked the beginning of a major shift in attitude towards Australian industry by the Government, unions and employers. In outlining the report to the ESFC’s parent body, the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET), the then Minister, John Dawkins, placed the importance of a national commitment to education and training in the context of a central economic goal of the Government:

...to shift from an inward-looking industry perspective to one which raises our international competitiveness in all areas of industry, and the concentration on economic activities which are at the forefront of modern technological development and/or intensive in human skills. *(The Need for Change p.87).*

The rhetoric of award restructuring and whether it has had any discernible impact on staff development in academic and state libraries is one of the key areas of investigation in this study. Whether, in fact, staff development programs in these libraries focussed on multi-skilling, increased productivity and efficiency as outcomes were issues which were explored.

**The National Training Reform Agenda**

In Australia, the combination of a changing workforce profile, the changing nature of work and industrial agreements and the changing role of education and training gave rise to the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA). It can be described as a cooperative national response by government, unions and employers to economic and industry restructuring, including labour market imperatives and emerging requirements arising from workplace reform. The main aim is to increase the competitiveness and
productivity of Australian industry through industry responsive reform of the vocational education and training system.

Flexibility to meet enterprise requirements within a stable and consistent national system was essential for reform to occur. The development of a National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) and nationally endorsed industry competency standards, along with The Training Guarantee Act (1990) (TGA) and its companion, The Training Guarantee (Administration) Act (1990), were intended to ensure that the Government’s major reform program for education and training for Australian industry took effect.

The extent to which practitioners in libraries were aware of the NTRA, the NFROT, competency standards and the TGA or of their potential impact in the workplace (and on staff development in particular), was another point of investigation of this study.

In summary, for Australian libraries, the introduction of workplace rearrangement (particularly award restructuring) and the Training Guarantee Act (1990) in the early 1990s brought with them a degree of confusion. There was confusion as to whether those libraries operating as separate units within larger institutions should meet the requirements of the TGA or whether they were covered by the parent institution. There was confusion about what the broadbanding of classifications for librarians and library-technicians might mean for career paths and progression. Initially, there was also confusion, even ignorance, about the extent to which the philosophy underpinning the National Training Reform Agenda, award restructuring and the TGA should, or could, be embodied in training and development programs. At the time of embarking on this
study, there was nothing written specifically for libraries on the implications of the
NTRA, award restructuring and the TGA and many librarians responsible for staff
development expressed the need for further guidance. Also at this time, members of the
Board of Education of the Australian Library and Information Association were aware
that the federal government’s training reform initiatives had the potential to impact on:

- entry levels and qualifications in the library and information industry;
- on-the-job training in libraries;
- staff development in libraries; and on the
- continuing professional development of workers in the library and information field.

This study was undertaken to provide some clarification for people working in libraries
on the following issues:

- workplace rearrangement with a particular focus on award restructuring, the
  Training Guarantee Act (1990) (TGA) and enterprise bargaining;
- the concept and purpose of the National Training Reform Agenda;
- the development and intended role of competency standards and competency-based training; and
- the role of staff development in the context of award restructuring and the National
  Training Reform Agenda, with its emphasis on the tripartite involvement of unions,
  federal government and employers to encourage a better skilled, more productive,
  internationally competitive workforce.
OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

The study began with a small scale examination of the effects of the TGA on staff development in Victorian academic libraries in 1991. From this the research broadened to include academic libraries in all states and territories and also to include state libraries. Data were gathered over a period of three years from surveys, interviews and institutional documents. However, the research was informed throughout by extensive analysis of published literature which was pertinent to aspects of the research topic.

Four research questions guided the study:

1. Have the concepts of workplace rearrangement, the Training Guarantee Act and the National Training Reform Agenda affected the design, implementation and evaluation of staff development programs in Australian academic and state libraries?

2. What do those responsible for staff development in Australian academic and state libraries know/understand of workplace rearrangement, the TGA and the NTRA?

3. Have the education and training principles of workplace rearrangement and the NTRA (and, in particular, industry competency standards) been incorporated into staff development programs in Australian academic and state libraries?

4. What do those responsible for staff development in Australian academic and state libraries understand the term “staff development” to mean?

Data to address these questions were sought in three ways. Two national surveys of Australian academic and state libraries were undertaken a year apart; documents were examined, for example, library staff development policy documents, and interviews were conducted, both to elaborate on survey data and to explore interviewees’ meaning of
the term, “staff development”. As stated above, these data were supplemented by an extensive analysis of the literature on the topic which helped to put the findings in a wider context.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was seen as an appropriate means of investigating the research questions - surveys to gain the national picture of the stage reached by state and academic libraries with award restructuring, enterprise bargaining and the TGA at two different points in time as well as to provide factual, numeric data which would allow comparisons to be made; interviews to help amplify aspects of the survey responses which needed more detail, to gain opinion and to gauge understanding; and a phenomenological analysis of the term, “staff development” to ascertain whether a commonplace term in the library industry actually had any commonality of meaning among respondents.

**SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

As stated above, the study began with a pilot investigation of the impact of one phenomenon, the TGA, on staff development in Victorian tertiary libraries. What emerged from this very limited study was an understanding that the TGA was only one of a number of national economic, industrial and educational reforms which had potential to affect the design and delivery of staff development in the industry. Stimulated by the preliminary study, the current investigation was embarked upon. From anecdotal evidence it appeared that sectors other than the academic sector were reacting more swiftly to economic, industrial and political change and state libraries were chosen as a suitable point of comparison for two reasons. First, as with academic libraries, their
limited numbers, made it possible to survey the total population. Second, they are the only other libraries in Australia of a similar size, national geographic spread, funding level and number of staff.

At the time of data collection, the national library industry competency standards were in the process of development. They have since been published. If the research were to be repeated now, the level of understanding of both the competency standards and other components of the National Training Reform Agenda would be different. Thus the generalisability of the research findings is limited. However, the study may serve to provide a snapshot in time of where academic and state libraries were positioned in relation to national labour market and training reforms in Australia.

**ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS**

Chapters One to Three set the context for the study. Chapter One covers the purpose, significance, research questions, methodological overview and scope of the thesis. Chapter Two reviews the literature pertaining to national training reform issues and workplace rearrangement. The section on national training reform issues addresses competency standards, models of competency and competency based training, and the national framework for the recognition of training (NFROT) which includes the recognition of prior learning. The section on workplace rearrangement includes award restructuring, enterprise bargaining and the TGA. Chapter Three reviews the literature of staff development as it relates to libraries and addresses the roles of policy, development and planning, evaluation and needs assessment, motivation and
commitment, methods and nature of training, flexibility and change and issues for continuing professional development.

Chapters Four and Five cover the research design, methodology and findings of the study. Chapter Four presents the research questions and the conceptual framework which was used to categorise the components of the research and guided data collection and analysis. The research design and its rationale is described, followed by a description of the methodological approach, means of data collection and strategies for data analysis. Chapter Five begins with an analysis of the survey data and, where possible, compares responses from both 1992 and 1993 data. Responses to the surveys’ open-ended headings are grouped and discussed. Findings from the two surveys are then summarised against the key features of the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA). The chapter concludes with a phenomenological analysis of the term ‘staff development’ and a synthesis of the findings. It should be noted that when the study began, the researcher was a library educator. Part way through, however, she took up a senior practitioner’s position. Thus the comments on the findings in Chapter 5 reflect these two perspectives.

Chapter Six updates developments and expressions of public opinion on aspects of both the NTRA and workplace rearrangement in Australia as recorded in the literature. The question of whether Australia spends enough money on formal education and training is discussed and limited comparisons are made with the USA, Japan, Western European countries, the UK, and Scandinavia. Developments in the NTRA are revisited and updated and criticisms of its approach are reported. Progress in workplace
rearrangement is outlined and impact of award restructuring and competency standards on staff development in academic and state libraries is discussed.

Chapter Seven concludes the study. The areas of research are again put in a broader economic and management context and the research findings are summarised. The methodology which was initially conceived to investigate one clearly defined phenomenon, the TGA, was, perhaps, limited when required to deal with such a broad investigation and reflections on this follow. The challenges facing library managers are discussed against this backdrop and suggestions for improving practice as well as suggestions for further research are made. Appendices provide detail not suitable for incorporation into the seven chapters and a glossary of terms and the list of references complete the work.
CHAPTER TWO

THE NATIONAL TRAINING REFORM AGENDA AND WORKPLACE REARRANGEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

Introduction

Three areas of knowledge informed the study:

1. the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA) with a focus on the competency standards;
2. workplace rearrangement with a focus on award restructuring, the *Training Guarantee Act* (TGA) and enterprise bargaining; and
3. the importance and role of staff development and training for library and information personnel in Australia.

This chapter deals with the first two areas. Both are a wellspring of factors external to libraries which may influence their staff development programs. The literature review helped form the framework of this study and guided the choice of research questions. This chapter addresses the key findings in the literature on the National Training Reform Agenda, library industry competency standards, award restructuring, the *Training Guarantee Act* and enterprise bargaining in turn. Issues to emerge which are particularly relevant to this study are synthesised at the end of the chapter.
The challenge for library managers is to design and implement staff development programs which are responsive to organisational and individual needs, but which are formulated in the context of the broader industrial and training arena. As part of its microeconomic reform strategy, the Labor Federal Government set an agenda to reform training across all industry sectors and occupations. The following section describes the National Training Reform Agenda and its intended outcomes. An essential part of this agenda is the use of competency standards. The problems of defining competency standards are addressed by an examination of a range of models. The section concludes with a summary of concerns about the use of competency standards in higher education and whether they have any relevance to the professions.

The National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA)

A vocational training and education system which is more responsive to industry needs is seen as being essential to improving Australia’s productivity and its international competitiveness. The training reform agenda focuses on the development of a nationally consistent, competency-based approach to vocational education and training, with a focus on workplace training. It is designed to complement and support other microeconomic reform initiatives, especially labour market reform which is occurring through enterprise bargaining and workplace rearrangement. (Arts Training Victoria, 1992, p. 14)
The NTRA has been embraced by government, industry peak bodies, and public and private vocational education and training (VET) providers. With its competency-based approach, the NTRA was introduced to accommodate a range of training pathways. The competency-based approach includes the notion of competency-based assessment which is criterion referenced rather than norm referenced.

**Intended outcomes of the NTRA**

Key features of the NTRA are the:

1. introduction of flexible training pathways to meet individual and industry needs;
2. transferability and portability of skills within/across industries, enhancing career path options;
3. establishment of nationally recognised qualifications and course accreditation procedures; and
4. development of articulation and pathways between courses and institutions.

The objectives of this change are to achieve a multi-skilled workforce, improved career paths, develop closer links between education/training providers, a move to resource-based learning, a focus on life-long learning and the recognition of prior learning (RPL), competency standards and articulation between courses (Arts Training Australia, 1993).

**Origins of the NTRA**

The genesis of the reform agenda appears in the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)’s vocational education and training policies as outlined in *Australia Reconstructed* (ACTU/TDC 1987), a blueprint for union and workplace reform based
on a new ‘compact’ between capital and labour and adopting a high-productivity, high-skills and high-wages strategy. The ideology espoused in this report was later fine-tuned by the Finn-Carmichael-Mayer triad - three major reports in the development and consolidation of the NTRA.

The Finn Report (Young People’s Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training 1991), in its discussion of the restructuring of the Technical and further Education (TAFE) sector, emphasised the need for a convergence of general and vocational education and of work and training, underpinned by a number of ‘key competencies’ necessary for all young people to learn in their preparation for employment. The report stressed the need for a variety of pathways for students through the education system, with improved articulation between the schooling, TAFE and higher education sectors as well as with workplaces and training providers. It also paid some attention to strategies required for the successful participation of young people from socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Technical education has a lower status in general in the community as a result of years of neglect and relative underfunding compared to the higher education sector and also as a result of the academic emphasis of secondary schooling. In the current situation of increasing demand for further education, TAFE has become a ‘second choice’ for those who fail to gain a university place, reinforcing its subordinate status. Within the TAFE system itself there has been a hierarchy with trade training being dominant, thereby disadvantaging those who do not fit the ‘skilled male worker’ model. Some men and most women are disadvantaged by this dominant model (Taylor and Henry, 1994, p.108). Award restructuring means that some of these issues are being addressed in the
workplace, but the TAFE sector still tends to be something of a male stronghold and many of the problems affecting the adequacy of training provisions for women remain. In 1992, only 14.6% of apprentices in Australia were women, and of these, 61% were training in hairdressing (Office of the Status of Women 1992, p.9).

Although the range of courses offered by the TAFE system broadened during the 1980s, the early 90s saw training which continued to be dominated by an outmoded and narrow training model, where credentials were gained by undertaking formal courses of training on or prior to leaving school (what Carmichael refers to as ‘front-end learning’). With changes in the structure of the labour market and the nature of work, it was argued (Carmichael) that a mismatch existed between the credentialling model and the workplace - a training system which was out of step with new integrated work practices.

The Carmichael Report (The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System Report 1992) sets out the broad parameters of a national system for combining work and training which effectively extends schooling to the end of year 12. The report introduced the Australian Vocational Certificate (AVC) training system, creating a broad range of education and training ‘pathways’ and adopting a competency-based training approach, ‘concerned with “outcomes”, rather than “inputs”; for example, what a person can do, rather than how long they spent in training. With competency-based training, what the student already knows (their “prior learning”), is assessed and built on’ (p.8). The AVC system is seen to contribute to equity by improving access to training, providing training opportunities for a wider range of occupations and through the emphasis on flexible pathways (p.14).
The Mayer Report (*Putting General Education to Work: The Key Competencies Report* 1992) fleshed out the key competencies initially flagged in the Finn Report. These are seen as generic in nature, that is, applying to work generally as well as to further education and adult life. Each of the eight competencies is to be defined at three levels of performance, assessed against nationally agreed performance levels. The so-called ‘Mayer competencies’ are discussed further in the section on competency standards below.

There were two broad policy trends which were relevant to the new policy agenda. On the one hand there was the government’s micro-economic reform strategy which was designed to upgrade the skills of the workforce through education and training; on the other there was the ACTU-driven award restructuring and workplace reform. These two agendas, which were a response to pressures for Australia to become more competitive in the global marketplace through increased productivity, ran parallel and to some extent, overlapped. Both agendas are linked by economic rationalist/human capital theory assumptions. Also, they both have broad social goals.

**Competency Standards**

The extent to which qualifications of professional and para-professionals in the library and information services industry are valued in the future could well be determined by the introduction of the National Competency Standards. The development of these standards has arisen as a result of the Federal and State Governments’ push for national industrial and training reform.
This national training reform is intended to operate on competency-based training and assessment systems. The Mayer Committee adopted a broad definition of competence which recognises that performance is underpinned not only by skill but also by knowledge and understanding, and that competence involves both the ability to perform in a given context and the capacity to transfer knowledge and skills to new tasks and situations. (*Putting General Education to Work* October 1992). The Mayer Committee identified a set of generic competencies which are intended to be achieved by the time a person leaves secondary school. They are as follows:

1. Collecting, analysing and organising ideas and information;
2. Expressing ideas and information;
3. Planning and organising activities;
4. Working with others and in teams;
5. Using mathematical ideas and techniques;
6. Solving problems;
7. Using technology; and
8. Cultural understanding.

Three levels of competencies have emerged from these generic competencies. The three levels are developmental and each builds on the former. The three levels of competency to emerge are:

1. cross industry competencies;
2. nationally identified competencies for each industry; and
3. enterprise or workplace competencies.

The industry level competencies build on the generic competencies and address those
areas of knowledge and skill which are industry specific. The cross industry competencies can be used by many industry sectors, e.g., training and assessment competencies. Enterprise competencies in turn, build on industry competencies and add any areas of knowledge or skill required specifically for that workplace.

Competency standards cover the full range of industrial classification levels developed through award restructuring... [they] ...provide a link between industrial awards and vocational education and training qualifications (Employers' Review 1992, p.124).

Nicholls (1992, p.2) offers the following definitions of competence and competency-based standards:

**Competence:** the attributes (knowledge, skill, attitudes) which enable an individual or group to perform a role or set of tasks to an appropriate level or grade of quality or achievement (i.e. an appropriate standard) and thus make the individual or group competent in that role.

**Competency-based standard:** a level or grade of competence, understood in terms of a combination of attributes, which can be a basis for goals of personal and professional/vocational development and evaluation or appraisal or performance.

The definition of competency used by The National Office for Overseas Standards Recognition (NOOSR) emphasises those factors which are more relevant to the professions.

The competence of professionals derives from their possessing a set of relevant attributes such as knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes. These attributes which jointly underlie competence are often referred to as competencies. So a competency is a combination of attributes underlying some aspect of successful professional performance ... Specifying the standard involves stating the kinds of tasks and
context in which the required level of achievement is to be exhibited. (NOOSR

Establishing Competency-based Standards in the Professions Research Paper No1

p.9)

The aim of these reforms is “...to create a structure for vocational training which will increase flexibility, efficiency and opportunity and enhance career options for workers in all industries” (Nicholls 1992, p.3).

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) was actively involved in the process of developing competency standards through its representation on Arts Training Australia, the Arts industry training board, which was recognised as the competency standards body for the library and information industry by the Federal Government. The development of competency standards for the library and information industry was completed in 1995. The competencies have been endorsed by the National Training Board and now libraries will have to consider their position in relation to competencies and competency-based training.

**Competency-based Training (CBT)**

Under CBT people receive recognition and certification as a result of demonstrated competence (outcomes) rather than on length of time spent in training (inputs). According to a work published by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Competency Based Training: How to make it work for you* (June 1993), there are clear advantages for both employers and employees. Advantages for employers are listed as follows:

- clear outcomes are established;
- the training is directly related to the outcomes;
- people who can already do the job competently can be exempted from the training;
- workforce skills will be improved more efficiently as a result of the focus of training; and
- theory will be linked directly to practice.

Advantages for employees are identified as well:
- training will be meaningful as it will relate directly to jobs;
- theory and practice will be combined;
- people can progress at their own pace;
- training can be built into career progression; and
- credit can be gained for competencies achieved through practice and experience

(Competency Based Training; p.9).

Competency standards could be used in enterprise bargaining, recognition of prior learning, development of career paths, providing a basis for articulation within or across industries, as a means of identifying skill and training gaps, as a means of identifying training needs for industry/individuals, as a tool to assist with recruitment, to provide a clear statement of professional/technical work identity and to offer benchmarks for training.

**The Australian Standards Framework (ASF)**

The National Training Board (NTB) established in 1989 by the Ministers of Vocational Education and Training (MOVEET), developed a set of national benchmarks known as
the Australian Standards Framework to reflect the competency levels relevant to industry and the workplace. The ASF provides a mechanism for comparing standards across occupations and industries. It also provides a basis for linking industry requirements to vocational education and training qualifications through a process of credentials reform. The ASF has eight competency levels which serve as reference points for the development and recognition of competency standards. The levels start at workforce entry levels and progress to senior professionals and managers. The main levels for the library and information industry are levels 5-7, that is, library technicians and professional librarians. The levels in the framework are 1) entry; 2) operative; 3) trade; 4) post-trade; 5) technician; 6) para-professional; and 7) and 8) professional (level 8 being a very senior professional or a manager with chief executive officer status).

To date the NTB has concentrated on the first six levels of the framework, and it is here that the stumbling block arises. As workers are encouraged to participate in vocational training and have the ability to move up and across classifications in order to create more satisfying and challenging career paths, the barrier between professional and para-professional becomes somewhat confused. Many academics argue that the workplace focus of the competency standards is where the approach comes unstuck. With the emphasis on relating educational outcomes to the workplace the risk is high that the focus will be on task-related skills (Goodacre 1992, p.124).
The National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT)

The legal right to recognise courses and develop recognition guidelines for program design rests with the states. The NFROT is an agreement between the states to standardise the accreditation/recognition process. It is underpinned by the CBT system and specifies ten principles for course/program recognition. All courses submitted for accreditation must comply with ten basic principles as well as five specific assessment requirements and a further five principles to guide the recognition of prior learning (Nationally Recognised Training - Bringing It Together 1992, pp. 10-11). These principles are provided in full in Appendix 4.

Competencies in Higher Education in Australia and their relevance to the training of professional librarians

As the Library and Information Services industry recently received its first set of competency standards, it is useful to examine the impact (current or potential) of competencies on higher education curricula which prepare professionals for practice. Although the competencies are an accepted basis for a national core curriculum for the preparation of library technicians (para professionals), there has been strong resistance by library educators working in the higher education sector to the use of competencies in curriculum design for the preparation of librarians.

There seem to be two contrasting world views underlying various governmental policy directions in education and training in Australia (Stevenson and Brown, 1994). One is that of the Commonwealth Government as emphasised in its skills formation literature, (e.g., Dawkins and Holding, 1987). This view supports the acquisition of a set of
attributes or capacities needed in the workplace for immediate functional use in employment and also broader and higher level attributes needed for adaptability, lifelong learning, communication ability, problem solving, innovation and team work. This view values the development of cognitive and interpersonal attributes which underlie the ability to function immediately on known tasks, as well as the ability to adapt to changing situations, innovate and solve problems.

The second view, implicit in the Government’s competency-based vocational education and training literature, values explicit, pre-specifiable, observable outcomes of learning at levels equivalent to predetermined industrial standards (National Training Board, 1990 and 1991). Thus the first is the valuing of underlying cognitive and interpersonal attributes, and the second values observable measurable performance to pre-specified standards (Stevenson and Brown 1994, p.118-120). Both views could be described as supporting a competency approach, but different conceptions of competency. This confusion of what is meant by the term competencies has contributed to the criticisms expressed by academics about the suitability of competencies in higher education.

The debate to date has been characterised by labelling. Terms such as atomistic, reductive, trivial, mechanistic, standardised, routine and discrete are often used to describe tasks or skills. These labels are often based on what competencies were at their inception rather than on what they have become. Moreover, many of the participants in the debate are reluctant to take an impartial look at competency standards. According to Paul Hager (1994), a major reason is that the influence of the vocational/general education dichotomy runs deep.
The thinking of many people in the higher education sector is dominated by the traditional dichotomy between vocational education and “genuine” education and all that this entails: body vs mind, hand vs head, manual vs mental, skills vs knowledge, applied vs pure, knowing how vs knowing that, practice vs theory, particular vs general, and training vs education (Hager, 1994, p.4).

For those who think in terms of this series of contrasts, it is clear that competency standards are essentially concerned with the performance of particular and discrete vocational tasks which, however skilled they may be, involve a minimum of thought. As such, competency standards are clearly the proper concern of training and have nothing to say to education. There are serious epistemological reasons why the vocational/general dichotomies are false. Knowledge and competencies are not as disparate as some commentators assume. Wolfe (1989) argues for the position “that there is no bifurcation between competence and education” (p.39). She takes this to mean that competency-based education “is perfectly compatible with the learning of higher-level skills, the acquisition of generalizable knowledge (and understanding), and with broad-based courses”. Wolfe’s reasons for supporting this position include:

- Both knowledge and competence are constructs, not something we can observe directly (p.40).
- What we know of the structure of the mind shows the importance of variety of cognitive abilities. Knowledge recall is only the start. Far from involving practice without theory, as some higher education critics fear, what competence does is to take us beyond lower cognitive abilities, such as recall, to higher cognitive abilities such as application and synthesis of knowledge.

Knowing how to do something is one thing, but knowing why it is done is crucial.
“Knowing” something involves knowing when to access it, and being able to do so when appropriate (p.42).

Another epistemological argument against the vocational/general dichotomy has been put by Wilson (1992). He says that by shunning the vocational, Universities risk inhibiting the growth of knowledge. Knowledge is a social product, he argues, and so are the ways in which we package it. He suggests an initial four-fold division:

a) enabling disciplines (e.g., philosophy, mathematics, computing);
b) disciplines concerned with the natural world (e.g., physics, chemistry, biology);
c) disciplines concerned with the human world (e.g., the arts, humanities, the social sciences); and

d) disciplines concerned with practice in the human world (e.g., engineering, medicine law, education [and of course librarianship]).

Wilson argues that all categories of the disciplines make valuable contributions to knowledge advance. Increasingly, significant advances require inter- and multidisciplinary input. He suggests that disciplines concerned with practice in the human world offer unique skills (e.g., design, diagnosis, pattern recognition) and should not be neglected in favour of the first three categories. Eraut (1985) is another to claim that significant knowledge exists within professions that is typically not recognised by academics.

Hager (1994, p.7) says the debate in Australia about competency standards and their relation to higher education has been clouded by dubious assumptions about the nature of vocational education. These assumptions have, in turn, created confusion about the
relation between competence and knowledge, and hence about the kinds of learning required to attain competence.

Models of competence

The evolution of the concept of competency can be traced by an examination of a number of models. These models embody the range of views reflected in the current competency debate.

1. The task model

In Australian higher education, narrow conceptions of competence as particular, discrete, vocational tasks are universally held to be undesirable. Not surprisingly, the philosophers of education have been trenchant in their rejection of such conceptions of competence. In the U.S.A. in the seventies, competency (or performance) based teacher education (CBTE or PBTE) had a brief flowering. (Houston 1974 provides a comprehensive discussion). CBTE represented the attempt to apply theories of behaviourist psychology to the analysis of teaching. It was based on a very narrow conception of competence and was intended to revamp teacher education courses in a major way. The CBTE approach to competence is to pre-specify performance as segments of overt behaviour. It argues that practising the performance directly is more efficient than achieving it indirectly through the conventional courses which are based on promise of performance (Broudy, 1984, p.3). Broudy, Johnson (1975) and Kaminsky (1975) had no difficulty in demolishing the theoretical foundations of this narrow approach to competence.
2. The action model

Noddings (1984) applied linguistic analysis to the problems of defining competence and of clarifying the relation between competence and human action. Her conclusion is that competence must be differentiated from performance. The key argument here is that, if competence consists of a series of observable behaviours, then the same series of observable behaviours will be displayed by anyone competent in a given field. It is evident, however, that not everyone competent in a given field will display the same series of observable behaviours (think of competent reference librarians); hence competence is not the same thing as performance. Noddings also points out that the occurrence of observable behaviours associated with competence in a given field may be explicable by causes other than competence (think of actors playing the roles of, say, lawyers).

Noddings concludes that the problem is being able to identify reliable indicators of competence and recommends an empirically-based, comprehensive, naturalistic study of actual professionals indisputably held to be competent as the main source of a description of competence. From this, in relation to teaching, she suggests that it should be “possible to construct theories that have some degree of the desired systematization ... capable of producing categories that will aid us in describing competence and in evaluating it” (p.21). Noddings commends the earlier work of Kerr and Soltis (1974) as a promising extension of her ideas.
Kerr and Soltis set out to develop “a theoretical model of teaching that possesses descriptive adequacy” (p.4). They propose an *action* description rather than a *behaviour* description:

One applies the adverb ‘competently’ only to those movements which a person *intends as a particular* type of activity... Thus, while it is possible to describe teaching, or any other human activity, as either *action*, which necessarily involves intended activity and appeals to a person’s reasons or goals to explain the activity, or as *behaviour*, which can be specified directly in terms of observable movement and appeals to causes for explanation, our interest in competency advises an action description (pp. 4-5).

3 Generic attributes model

Those who criticise the task or behaviourist approach to competency standards in higher education prefer instead to focus on generic attributes as the best indicators of future successful performance. Hager (1994, p.7) claims that “the difficulty with this second approach is that the link between a generic attribute, such as analysis, and actual professional performance is doubly vague: first because the claim that graduates develop a capacity for analysis is typically not subjected to detailed scrutiny ... and secondly because what analysis typically means in the day-to-day practice of the profession is not considered”.

4 The integrated approach

The way in which professional competency standards have been developed in Australia under the aegis of the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) combines the tasks or the key intentional actions of the second model with the attributes
of the third. According to the integrated model, competence is conceptualised in terms of knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes displayed in the context of a carefully chosen set of realistic professional tasks (intentional actions) which are of an appropriate level of generality.

A feature of this integrated approach is that it avoids the problem of a myriad of tasks by selecting key tasks (intentional actions) which are central to the practice of the profession. The main attributes required for the competent performance of these key tasks (intentional actions) are then identified. Experience has shown that, when both of these are integrated to produce competency standards, the results do capture the holistic richness of professional practice (Hager, 1994, p.10).

Hager views the fragmenting of a profession into a myriad of tasks, as the first approach to competence does, as being overly atomistic. Actual practice is much richer than sequences of these isolated tasks, and the overall approach fails to provide any synthesis of tasks. Using this approach, the distinctive character of the profession has been destroyed by the analysis. In practice, some degree of atomism in approaches to competence will be acceptable, provided it is accompanied by a suitable degree of holism. The integrated approach espoused by Hager and endorsed by NOOSR supports holism in several important ways:

- The competency standards are holistic in that competence is a construct that is inferred from performance of relatively complex and demanding intentional actions. The relative complexity of the actions can be gauged from the fact that a typical profession involves no more than thirty to forty such key intentional actions (the fact that the national Library Industry Competency Standards lists seventy-one competencies could be cause for concern).
• The tasks or intentional actions in these competency standards are not discrete or independent. Actual professional practice will often simultaneously involve several of these intentional actions.

• The intentional actions involve what Walker (1992, following Elliott, 1991) calls ‘situational understanding’; that is, the competency standards include the idea that the professional performer takes account of the varying contexts in which she or he is operating. A more general cognitive perspective is needed to frame a skilled intentional action appropriate to the context.

• By integrating key tasks and attributes (that is, by integrating intentional actions with characteristics or qualities of individuals), competence is achieved by a relation between professionals and their work.

These holistic or integrated professional competency standards allow for professional discretion. They do not prescribe that all professionals will have identical overall conceptions of their work. Whereas one professional may be strongly committed to excellence of practice, another may have an equally strong commitment to social justice. The integrated model supports a variety of professional approaches.

Hager (1994, p.11) discusses how these competencies will be assessed. Since they are based on the idea that competence is a construct “that is not directly observable, but rather is inferred from successful performance, it is clear that performance will be vital for assessment”. Although evidence from performance will be central to assessment, it may be supplemented by other kinds of evidence, evidence about possession of attributes, such as certain kinds of knowledge.
### Table 2.1: Three different conceptions of competence and their implications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviourist or Specific Tasks Approach</th>
<th>Attribute or Generic Skills Approach</th>
<th>Integrated or Task + Attribute Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Overt performance is competence performance.</td>
<td>General attributes as predictors of future</td>
<td>Competence inferred from performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Atomistic, reductive, trivial, mechanistic, standardised, routine, discrete tasks or skills.</td>
<td>Abstract, remote from actual practice, problem of transfer-overall rationale often lacking</td>
<td>Holistic, richness of practice captured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Large number of specific competencies list lengthens with complexity of work, eg professions.</td>
<td>Small number of generic competencies</td>
<td>Manageable number of key competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Uniformity (1 right way)</td>
<td>Diversity (&gt;1 right way)</td>
<td>Diversity (&gt;1 right way)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ‘Doing’ curriculum Practical modules Jettison current curriculum.</td>
<td>Conventional curriculum Fragmented into subjects</td>
<td>Powerful device for improving content delivery and assessment of current curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Central control of curriculum.</td>
<td>Provider autonomy in curriculum</td>
<td>Profession/provider joint control of curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Checklist for ticking invalid assessment.</td>
<td>Traditional assessment has its limitations</td>
<td>Competence demonstrated over time, portfolios, etc. Assessment needs careful planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Minimum competence Lowest common denominator discourages excellence ‘Deskillling’</td>
<td>Encourages excellence that is remote from professional practice</td>
<td>Richness of quality professional performance captured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hager 1994, p.49)

### 5. Relational model

Bowden and Masters (1993) build on the integrated model with their relational model of observable practice and underlying capacities. They claim that for teaching and learning
to be totally effective, all levels of the model are to be taken into account. The model comprises three levels: (i) observable practice, (ii) discipline based capacities (e.g., knowledge, skills and attitudes), (iii) generic capacities (meaningful only through links to levels two and one). The relationships are described diagrammatically below.

**Figure 2.1: Relational model of observable practice and underlying capacities**

![Diagram of relational model](image)

Individuals need appropriate knowledge and understanding if they are to be effective practitioners. They need to develop capacities of judgement, imagination and analysis if they are to effectively apply their skills and understanding to real-life problems. To do this they also need practical experience; all the levels are necessary. More than that, they are linked. Understanding is unlikely to be complete if it is not integrated with real-life experience. Generic capacities derive their meaning through interaction with some concrete knowledge domain or real world practice. The idea of teaching problem-
solving in an abstract, context-free way doesn’t bear scrutiny; all learning is contextual (Bowden and Masters, 1993, p.156-157).

In their report, Bowden and Masters conclude that professional organisations have significant expertise in the practice of the profession (level one in the model). University academics are often experienced in the profession as well, but their experience may not be as recent. Practising professionals will also have good knowledge of the underlying disciplines (level two on the model) but the university academics are likely to be at the forefront of knowledge in the disciplines and perhaps in its relationship to professional practice. Traditionally, university-based, vocational education programs have sought to provide graduates with discipline-based and generic capacities required for competent performance in the workplace (a focus on levels two and three in the model). However, there has been regular questioning of the relevance of much of what is done in vocational courses for practice.

The Vocational Education Employment and Training Advisory Committee (VEETAC) states that Australian educators and trainers designate skills and knowledge and develop programs based on the best available direction from industry, but often without a thorough analysis and identification of what is required by particular work processes, industries and enterprises (VEETAC, 1993, p.3).

Bowden and Masters found in their study that employers and professional organisations criticised Australian universities for ignoring the links between levels one and two in their model.
In terms of our model, the identification and documentation of workplace role requirements can be visualised as a mapping of parts of the surface of Level 1, followed by a projection of that map onto the surface of Level 2. It is this image of narrow prescriptiveness which has led Australian academics, rightly or wrongly, largely to reject a competency-based approach to education (1993, p. 166).

**Common concerns about the use of competency standards in higher education**

Competency standards make no claim to exhaust all facets of a profession, just as traditional entry procedures for professionals do not claim to be totally comprehensive. The concern that competency standards will demand a uniformity in the way that professionals practice is unfounded. There is more than one correct way to perform most professional tasks. Standards do not imply standardisation of procedure, but refer to outcomes, leaving open the way in which they are achieved. Professional competencies developed using an integrated or relational approach allow for the diversity which is proper to the practice of a profession.

1. **Competency-based training (CBT)**

Whereas a concept of competency using an integrated or relational model is suitable to inform (or even improve) the curricula for the preparation of professionals, the concept of competency-based training is unsuitable in the higher education sector. Academics are correct in their rejection of professional courses becoming a series of practical modules, as the roles and tasks approach to analysing professional competence suggests. The place for CBT is in the workplace where it is ideally suited to on-the-job-training. If one conceptualises competence using the integrated approach in terms of
knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes displayed in the context of realistic professional tasks (or intentional actions), then these consequences no longer follow. Rather than adopting competency-based training, the integrated approach offers powerful guidance, but it is only guidance, for improvement of traditional courses in respect of content, teaching strategies and assessment procedures.

Entry-level competency standards specify what new graduates should be able to do but say nothing about how this state is to be achieved. Hence, for providers, there is as much flexibility as ever to decide what to teach and with what emphasis, how to teach it and how to assess it. However, assuming that there is room for improvement in most existing courses, a well designed set of competency standards which are regularly revised will provide invaluable guidance on content changes as well as new methods of delivery and assessment. As always, there is more than one way to teach effectively.

2. Lowest common denominator

A criticism that is commonly advanced in relation to entry-level competency standards is that, because they prescribe minimum standards, they therefore discourage excellence by reducing everything to the lowest common denominator. These charges are no more logical than making the same claims about traditional examinations on the ground that there is a minimum mark for gaining a pass. More specifically, this myth is based on a complete misunderstanding of the nature of the standards. For the charge to have any substance, the standards would have to relate to tasks that admit to no degree of performance; that is, you can either do it or not. However, in professional work such tasks are rare. The standards should relate to tasks which admit to many degrees of
performance, as does the task of taking a traditional examination. In both cases, the existence of a minimum satisfactory level of performance is consistent with a full range of performances from fail through to excellent. The expectation is that most graduates of professional courses will greatly exceed the performance levels specified by the entry-level competency standards, just as most entrants to the professional courses greatly exceed the entry requirements.

3. Assessment methods

Assessment, too, is a cause of concern. The use of checklists and their lack of suitability for assessing professional work is a valid criticism. Given the complexity of professional work, this is seen as a futile attempt to achieve objectivity at the cost of sacrificing validity (Ashworth and Saxton, 1990, p.22-23). As Spencer (1983) observes, in an attempt to be explicit and comprehensive, checklists rapidly become unwieldy and impractical. Pottinger (1979, p.39) points out that the preoccupation with discrete behavioural objectives often results in inappropriate approaches to defining and measuring professional competence and neglects to measure the many personal qualities important to professional competence, such as common sense, leadership abilities, interpersonal effectiveness, moral reasoning, empathy, initiative and problem solving ability. Unfortunately, those who award credentials and licenses have often settled for measuring small components of these qualities in terms of specific knowledge, skills and abilities that they hope are related to these more general qualities.

Competency-based assessment (CBA) is sometimes portrayed as an alternative to tests of knowledge which may be seen to assess primarily ‘theoretical’ or ‘scholarly’ learning.
Under this view, CBA is seen as a direct assessment of performance in the workplace as opposed to an indirect assessment of procedural or factual knowledge in isolation from actual workplace tasks. An emphasis on directly observable workplace skills has led many systems of CBA to emphasise observable, routinised task skills, often of a psychomotor kind. Kennedy (1987) refers to this as the ‘technical-skills’ approach to defining and assessing professional competence and criticises this approach as paying insufficient attention to the role of knowledge of theory and principles in professional expertise.

Masters and McCurry (1990) draw attention to the crucial role that the professional’s knowledge base plays in professional practice. There is, they say, increasing evidence that what distinguishes competent professionals from novices (e.g., students) is the access that competent professionals have to a rich and highly organised knowledge base (p.13). They conclude, however, that professional competence is not adequately conceptualised and assessed in terms of knowledge alone, particularly through tests of decontextualised knowledge. Factual and procedural knowledge must be assessed, but in the context of the candidate’s ability to draw on that knowledge to solve realistic problems (p.15).

There are also difficulties associated with the assessment of professional skills, such as initiative, confidence, motivation, etc. This problem is identified by Gonczi, Hager and Athanasou (1993, p.3):

It is clear that there is a significant amount of research that needs to be undertaken in the area of competency-based assessment in the professions. For example, there is little or no literature on how to reliably and validly assess learning how to learn, yet
this is increasingly being identified as an essential competency in the work of many professions. Similarly, there is little literature on the assessment of attitudes, yet values and attitudes are consistently identified by the professionals as vital to competent professional work.

They suggest that suitable methods for assessing these qualities will need to be developed. This point is also stressed by Goodacre (1992, p.122) who asks:

Are traditional assessment methods adequate or do we need to develop others?

Further, if we are able to assess competencies, is there any guarantee that acquisition of competence will translate into performance in the workplace?

In the integrated approach, aspects of professional practice are described as areas of competence. Rather than being competent or not, candidates are regarded as having varying degrees or levels of competence within each of these areas. The question to be asked of each candidate is whether their level of competence meets the minimum acceptable level (i.e., standard) for that area of professional practice. Competence is not regarded as something that is directly observed. Rather, competence in an area of professional practice is indirectly inferred from performance, usually on specially designed assessment tasks. This requires that within each of these areas of professional competence, the minimum acceptable level of competence or standard needs to be established against which candidates are to be judged. Competencies themselves are NOT standards. A standard is an answer to the question, ‘How good is good enough?’ and this question can be answered only by professional judgement. Masters and McCurry (1990, p.29) say:

In setting a standard for an area of occupational competence, an attempt is made to avoid two kinds of wrong decisions:
• a decision to register for practice somebody who is not competent to practice;
• a decision to bar from practice somebody who is competent.

4. Competency-based assessment (CBA) methods.

As the role of credentials in society has become more crucial, assessment has come to dominate education in several important ways. Gonczi, Hager and Athanasou (1993 p.7) say the use of assessment has expanded to include:

• passing/failing students;
• grading or ranking a population of students against one another;
• measuring students’ psychological characteristics;
• predicting success in future courses/employment;
• providing feedback to students/educators;
• motivating students;
• accrediting institutions; and
• diagnosing students’ strengths/weaknesses.

Clearly CBA of professional competence makes no claim to displace all of these diverse assessment activities that occur in education generally.

As stated earlier, CBA is the process of judging competence against pre-established standards. It requires the gathering of sufficient evidence about competencies to enable a judgement about competence to be made. Since competence can be inferred from performance, the range and kinds of performance activities that are assessed need to be as varied and sufficient in number as is required to make the inference safe. Performance need not only be thought of as workplace based; it can extend to performance
equivalents including role plays, simulations and case studies. The assessment methods chosen should be those that are most direct and relevant to the performance being assessed. In librarianship, the selection of appropriate reference tool sources to supply answers to a range of reference questions can be assessed through a written or oral test, but the ability to ascertain a client’s information need in a reference interview requires a performance assessment (real life experience as gained on practicum placement or role play). Thus, a range of assessment methods is recommended to be used in providing evidence on which to infer competence. Library schools Australia-wide already use a variety of methods which are consistent with a CBA approach. These include:

- projects/assignments (often drawing on real workplace situations);
- skills/ worksample tests (such as, Dewey Decimal Classification or use of Library of Congress Subject Headings);
- log books or diaries;
- direct observation of work activities (practicum/fieldwork);
- evidence from prior learning (especially true when admitting library technicians into professional courses).

From the foregoing, the sharp contrast between CBA and traditional norm-referenced assessment should be evident. Whereas CBA assesses the performance of an individual against pre-established criteria, norm-referenced assessment is concerned with comparing the performance of an individual against the performance of the group. Certainly during the time this researcher lectured, most Australian library schools did not employ norm-referenced assessment. Although national competency standards did not exist, pre-established standards were set by the lecturing staff with reference to industry
representatives on course advisory committees, practicum supervisors, academic requirements of the parent universities and course recognition criteria set by the professional body, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA).

Gonczi, Hager and Athanasou (1993, p.9) say:

A profession that develops a sound program of competency-based assessment should be better equipped to:

(i) Assess the competence of people with non-typical, non-formal experience-based qualifications;
(ii) Develop a systematic career path within the profession from novice through various levels to expert or specialist. The career path may also extend to the sub-professional level;
(iii) Enable entry to and/or progression within the profession to become competency-based;
(iv) Plan and organise an effective internship or professional year at the end of the formal university course (where this is applicable)[this is the model used by the Library Association in the UK and has often been raised as a possible model for use in Australia];
(v) Provide an assessment system responsive to the needs of the profession and the public it serves.

They conclude by stating that:

...while competency-based assessment throws up some challenges to the professions, the rewards are potentially very substantial. The creation of a genuinely valid competency-based assessment strategy can yield great benefit, not only to the professions but to the whole community (p. 72).

5. Centrally controlled curricula
Many library educators have voiced the concern that if curricula were to be based on the library competency standards, then control would reside in government bureaucrats, such as the Australian National Training Authority or industry training advisory bodies such as that responsible for the library industry, Cultural Recreation Education and Training Enterprise Australia - CREATE (formerly Arts Training Australia). To date, involvement of the professional body has been unusual in the development of competency standards. However, along with employers, unions and the government, ALIA has been involved with the development of industry competencies from the start. In this way, the profession owns and develops the standards. In many cases, library educators are active members of the professional body, hence they have had representation on the body responsible for developing the standards.

At the moment, ALIA requires Australian library schools to demonstrate that they meet a set of criteria in order to receive professional recognition, but these criteria can be met in a range of ways. Diversity is encouraged. One of the many advantages of the recognition process is that ALIA shares with educators examples of ‘best practice’ for preparing graduates at the first award level, thereby both maintaining and raising standards. ALIA is fully aware that judicious use of CBA would be advantageous in providing evidence on which to infer competence, both for initial preparation and for continuing professional development of library and information services personnel.

Competency standards present a unique opportunity for professions in Australia to raise their community image by increasing their level of professionalism. The competency standards are an explicit public statement of what the profession does, something that previously has not been readily available in most cases (although in 1992, ALIA had
published a set of *Work Level Guidelines*). What the competency standards furnish is a common ground for discussion between providers and the profession that does not exist clearly at present.

*Use of competency standards in continuing professional development (CPD)*

Beyond entry level, competency standards offer considerable guidance for the longer-term development of the profession. CPD has been criticised frequently for lack of direction and/or rationale. The clear specification of what a competent professional needs to be able to do will provide a much sharper focus for CPD. Similar considerations apply to refresher courses for people returning to the profession after an absence or for people whose training is out of date. The value of competency standards for efficient and equitable recognition of overseas qualifications is also important.

Competency-based assessment will assist CPD by providing:

- a means of accrediting genuine self-initiated/self-managed learning that is relevant to the profession;
- a basis for national planning of CPD allocations from the resources of the profession; and
- evidence of the contribution of CPD to furthering of professional standards.

CBA will enable providers to set clear objectives for CPD programs that meet the real needs of the profession and delineate a career path from novice through to expert. By clarifying the role of CPD in relation to initial courses, CPD programs are able to adapt quickly to meet changing labour market requirements. ALIA’s Board of Education has
prepared a set of principles for CPD which endorse the use of competency standards and CBA for the very reasons stated above.

**WORKPLACE REARRANGEMENT**

Apart from the NTRA, workplace rearrangement is the second area to give rise to external factors which have the potential to influence staff development programs in Australian academic and state libraries. Library managers keep abreast of numerous industrial issues but award restructuring and along with it, multi-skilling, the *Training Guarantee Act* and enterprise bargaining are, or have been, of particular importance to staff development. Each of these concepts is discussed below.

**Award Restructuring**

In an economic climate where education and training are seen to be critically important in increasing the international competitiveness of Australian industry, the handing down of the 1988 wage decision and its establishment of the structural efficiency principle (SEP), was an important milestone in recognition of the need for reform of the Australian labour market.

In August 1989 the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, (which replaced the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission), handed down the second national wage decision, which retained the structural efficiency principle as the key component but with “...an emphasis on the achievement of real results” (*Australian Labour Law Reporter* 1989, p.22023). An examination of employment conditions and work patterns was stressed and expectations as to how structural efficiency exercises would
be implemented were defined. It also emphasised the importance of providing appropriate and effective training. The principles of the decision were:

...developed with the aim of providing, for their period of operation, a clear framework under which all concerned - employees, workers and their unions, governments and tribunals - can co-operate to ensure that labour costs are monitored; that measures to meet the competitive requirements of industry and to provide workers with access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs are positively examined; and that lower paid workers are protected.

In a review of the national wage case the *Australian Industrial Law Review* (1989, p.287) summarises the key features as follows:

...within this framework measures to be considered should include but not be limited to:

- establishing skill-related career paths which provide an incentive for workers to continue to participate in skill formation;
- eliminating impediments to multi-skilling and broadening the range of tasks which a worker may be required to perform;
- creating appropriate relativities between different categories of workers within the award and at enterprise level;
- ensuring that working patterns and arrangements enhance flexibility and the efficiency of the industry;
- including properly fixed minimum rates for classifications in awards, related appropriately to one another, with any amounts in excess of these properly fixed minimum payments being expressed as supplementary payments;
- updating and/or rationalising the list of respondents to awards; and
- addressing any cases where award provisions discriminate against sections of the workforce.
Thus, the purpose of award restructuring was to overhaul industrial awards to do away with outmoded provisions, and to make them more relevant and appropriate to the needs of modern industry and workers. Three priorities of the restructuring process were:

- the revision of job classification structures;
- multi-skilling; and
- provision of new career paths, underpinned by major reforms to skill formation and training arrangements.

Other issues such as better use of technology, improvements to work organisation, working patterns and payment systems were also addressed. The focus varied with the needs of various industries.

The current literature implies that, overall, award restructuring has potential benefits for workers but, because of the nature of work in the field of library and information science and the spread of employees over a number of industries, there are a few problems which need to be addressed. Two of these are the low representation of people working in the library and information industry in their respective unions and, linked to this, the number of part-time workers in the industry.

In the higher education sector, conflict between the Australian Higher Education Industrial Association (AHEIA) and the unions arose when consideration was given to the structure of these standards and whether they should be awarded on the basis of “function” or “merit”. A compromise was reached between the two parties, however, concern was expressed that the AIRC’s decision was based on the Metal Trades
Industry Association model which focuses on skill rather than merit and that efficiency in the manufacturing sector cannot be compared to that in the public sector. Grange (1991, p.61) is also of the opinion that consensus between universities and the unions has not been reached due to “...historic state based loyalties and considerations” and that delays in implementation may reduce “commitment from many parties to the success of the proposals.” (p.62)

While Owen (1991, p.68) states that “...the broad objectives of the ACTU and the AHEIA are to establish a national classification and salary structure”, the emphasis at the moment is based on tasks rather than the skill to perform tasks and that remuneration is often linked to the status of the task. This raises concern for some staff who may be classified at the same level but who see their skills as distinctly different, which may provide the basis for future conflict.

The issue of classification is particularly pertinent to library staff as they are covered by a variety of industry unions and may therefore be working under vastly different conditions. McKeon (1991, p.30) notes that “...library staff in Australia are covered by over 60 awards.” At that point in time “...less than 10 awards [had] been restructured to a point of having pay and classification structures”.

For academics, award restructuring has meant career development through position classification standards and broadbanded salary structure (Currie 1992, p.18). Grange (1991, p.63) is more positive about the reduction in the number of classifications and states that it will provide for:

- improved comparative classification of positions;
• improved performance appraisal and performance management;
• improved training and development;
• greater flexibility and career path movement.

Owen (1991, p.72) states that, “The key to the implementation of the new classification structure will be the union delegates at each institution” as they will be responsible for ensuring that the classification process is carried out equitably. He goes on to stress the importance of co-operation between unions and management to ensure that this can take place. By developing a skill based classification structure, Owen suggests that general staff should be given the opportunity to develop career paths and gain skills both on- and off- the-job and that recognition should also be given to skills gained through experience.

Although there are some inherent problems in the award restructuring process, it provides a framework for increasing the level of skill of the Australian workforce and for career opportunities. Grange (1991, p.63) believes, “It will lead to greater opportunities for job rotation and career change, it will reduce impediments to on-the-job training and it will re-define the application of multi-skilling concepts.” Currie (1992, p.20) argues that award restructuring provides “...more incentive to develop training programs”, and as a result institutions are examining their staff development policies and requesting financial assistance in the development of programs.
Multi-Skilling

The successful implementation of award restructuring and enterprise bargaining requires a reduction in the number of job classifications brought about by multi-skilling and broadbanding, an increase in the flexibility and efficiency of the workforce, and the development of skill-related career paths in order to encourage skill development.

Nicholson (1991, p.35) defines multi-skilling as “...the acquisition, addition and increase in the level of task related skills and knowledge to enable an individual to perform a wider range of tasks and functions...” This approach “...will impact on design of jobs, skill requirements, training, re-design of work areas, performance appraisal and evaluation.” She anticipates that this will have advantages for both employees and employers. Employees should benefit from increased job security and career opportunities; increased job satisfaction and increased involvement in decision making. McKeon (1990, p.123) also states that multi-skilling will require less supervision of employees and that “...flatter hierarchies of supervision will occur. Decision making will be devolved down to the coal face more often.” Employers, on the other hand, will benefit from a more flexible workforce resulting in increased productivity and improvements in the ability of organisations to adapt to change.

Multi-skilling raises a number of concerns for those working in the information service sector. Line (1991, p.98) believes that “...the range of skills required is greater than ever, but many of these are not library skills; they are in computing, systems design, marketing and so on.” He is of the opinion that traditional library skills will become devalued and:
...expertise, which makes it easier for staff to acquire new skills, will be more important than specialism.” In libraries... the dividing lines between academic and non-academic, between professional and non-professional, will disappear; they will simply not be relevant. If a person can do the job, their qualification will not matter. In any case, library qualifications will come to have less importance than proven skills in managing, marketing, computing, etc...” which are “...transferable skills (1991, p.101).

The issue of specialist expertise is among the concerns raised by Nicholson (1991, p.40). She asks:

Will emphasis on vocational skills devalue entry level qualifications?

What will be the relativity between professional librarians and library technicians?

Will relativity between librarians and other professionals be maintained by additional specialist skills, by additional special qualifications such as higher degrees or by additional managerial rather than vocational skills?

If qualifications are mandatory for certain skill levels, should those qualifications be dependent on membership of the professional association rather than the satisfactory completion of courses?

Further, should professional membership be dependent on demonstration of continuing professional development?

However, she concludes on a positive note stating:

Multi-skilling offers many opportunities for our profession. The greater emphasis on education will enable us to demonstrate the broad range of skills held in our profession, as well as the potential of sophisticated levels of skill. This will in turn enable recognition of contribution and expertise and librarians should have greater access to many related areas of work. (1990, p.40).
Labour market reform is a key ingredient of the Federal Government’s strategy to make Australian industry more productive, more competitive, and more capable of generating longer term economic growth, while at the same time expanding opportunities for individual workers and improving the quality of work life. The structural efficiency principle (SEP), which underpins award restructuring, requires unions and employers to reach agreement on measures to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their industry. It also means that everyone in the industry who is subject to an award will be required to undergo continual training throughout their career if they wish to advance. The way in which SEP has been introduced into the Library at the University of Melbourne has stressed staff participation and collaborative decision making. The process is about change in the workplace and, where implemented, it has made the work units more productive and efficient. (Figures supplied by areas of the Library where SEP has been applied indicate that productivity has risen by 12% each year over the past 3 years). According to staff who have been involved, the benefits have included increased job satisfaction, reduced job stress and greater interest in and responsibility for the work.

The Training Guarantee Scheme

The Training Guarantee Scheme commenced on July 1, 1990. The operation and administration of the Scheme is set out in the Training Guarantee Act 1990 (TGA) and the Training Guarantee (Administration) Act 1990 and subsequent amendments to these acts. The acts are administered by the Australian Taxation Office although, at the time of writing, they are in suspension.
In May of 1989, the Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC) handed down its interim report on industry training in Australia. It was entitled, *The Need for Change*. The report’s findings were based on submissions from a wide range of industry, community and union groups as well as government bodies and local government authorities. Over 200 groups and individuals presented submissions and a further 48 organisations were consulted on industry training. While some individual educational institutions presented submissions to the ESFC, the majority were industry based.

The terms of reference of the ESFC’s submissions included:

- an examination and assessment of how to improve the quality and responsiveness of industry training;
- the current and probable effects of the reform process on training and the effective use of skills;
- the specific training needs of industry;
- the means of improving access to those who traditionally have poor access;
- the means of improving training in small business, including farms;
- the extent and means of employee contributions to the cost of training; and
- the role of government or legislation in any reforms.

Submissions received indicated that unions favoured a training levy of 3% with a wages threshold ranging from $100,000 (Trades Hall Council) to between $500,000 and $1 million (ACTU). Industry submissions, on the other hand, were opposed to any levy, legislation or government interference, believing that employers and industry groups should be able to respond to their own particular needs. Many submissions noted the
need for schools and the TAFE system to provide a better quality of education and to be more responsive to the needs of industry.

The unions’ commitment to training and skills formation and the need for greater industry participation in this endeavour had been set out in an earlier report, *Australia Reconstructed* (1987). This was the outcome of a joint mission to Western Europe by the ACTU and the Trade Development Council. While not directly related to the inception of the Training Guarantee Scheme, it articulates the need for the workforce to be reorganised along lines consistent with increased productivity and the welfare of the workers and maximisation of that productivity through industrial democracy and workplace negotiations.

The then Minister for Employment Education and Training, John Dawkins, was keen to legislate to correct the perceived failure of the market to meet the demand and need for training. He linked changes in the higher education system to a substantial increase in its capacity to respond to national goals of the structural adjustment and increased competitiveness of Australian industry. Initiatives such as the reform of TAFE funding, the move to competency-based training, the establishment of a National Training Board and providing assistance for innovative industry training agreements were consistent with government encouragement for award restructuring and its accompanying incentives for workers and employers to invest in skill improvements (Dawkins, 1990).

Dr. William Hall, Executive Director of the TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, undertook a survey of the quality of training provisions in 24 major public organisations and private sector companies. The results were depressing: non-existent
or uncoordinated training policies and, worse still, lack of supervisor training. He pleads care in the use of “consultants” and “experts” springing up in the wake of the *Training Guarantee Act*. A 2-day, train-the-trainer course is unlikely to provide the requisite teaching skills for effective training, he argues. He concludes, “Hard work is needed by senior management to grapple with their company’s training needs if Australia is going to have any sort of future” (Hall 1990, p.3).

The Training Guarantee Scheme was set up to ensure that employers spent some money on the training necessary to achieve the structural efficiency principle embodied in award restructuring. Put simply, it required employers to either spend money on training, or be taxed the equivalent amount of money on an annual basis. The intent of the Scheme was to improve the efficiency and international competitiveness of Australian industry by:

- increasing the level and quality of employment related skills in
  - productivity;
  - flexibility; and
  - safety;
- urging employers to build quality, planning and structure into training programs;
- ensuring a minimum level of expenditure on quality and effective training.

On its introduction, the TGA required employers to meet a minimum training requirement if their annual national payroll in 1990-91 reached a threshold of $200,000. Thereafter, it was indexed to average weekly earnings. Net eligible training expenditure was to be at least 1% of total payroll in each financial year of the period 1990-92 and 1.5% from then on. This expenditure had to be directly attributable, either solely or principally, to eligible training programs, or to certain related activities.

_Eligible Training Expenditure_

It is important that the definition of training, that is, _eligible_ training expenditure be broad such as: “...expenditure on structured learning which is designed to result in measurable outcomes.” (Employment Skills Formation Council 1989, p.58).

According to the Act, an eligible training program is one which is formally structured, whose principal object is development, maintenance or improvement of employment related skills and where recreation does not form a significant part or object of the program. A “structured” program is one which should:

- be designed, or approved, by a person appropriately qualified or experienced in the design of suitable programs;
- clearly identify the skills to be acquired before commencement;
- set out the method of imparting such skills before commencement;
- formulate program outcomes clearly prior to commencement or have the means to identify the extent to which the program has enhanced the participants’ productivity.
Under the Scheme allowable expenditure includes formulation of a strategic training plan including training needs analysis; costs of development, delivery, evaluation and administration; structured training (including on-the-job training) costs such as:

- wages and on-costs of trainees;
- wages and on-costs of human resource development or training managers and staff who will conduct training;
- course fees including contributions towards HECS;
- expenses where they are exclusively related to course attendance including travel and accommodation expenses;
- child care expenses incurred during periods of training; and
- train-the-trainer expenses;

and contributions to approved education and training bodies and intermediaries such as:

- tertiary education institutions;
- group training schemes; and
- industry training bodies and contributions to industry-initiated training funds.

Under the Act, it is the employer’s responsibility to ensure that a training program is appropriately structured prior to authorising employees to attend the program.

The types of training and staff development activities commonplace in libraries are all eligible under the TGA. Although most libraries’ parent bodies spend well in excess of the Act’s requirements, when the legislation took effect, many libraries argued the need to spend a minimum of 1.5% of their own budgets on staff development as a way of boosting the amount allocated.
Registered Industry Training Agents

Registered Industry Training Agents (RITAs) are a mechanism established under the Scheme to provide advice to employers on training for their employees and to certify training programs and expenditure as prescribed under the TGA. In 1991, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) obtained registration as an Industry Training Agent. According to The Training Guarantee Scheme: Guidelines for the Library and Information Industry (ALIA 1992, p.4), as a RITA the Association:

- fulfils the statutory function of assessment of eligible training programs and/or expenditure in the issue or refusal of Training Advisory Certificates for employers on application;
- provides general advice on the requirements of the Training Guarantee Act;
- plays an educational role promoting training; and
- provides advice on relevant training opportunities and training program development.

ALIA is well placed to offer this expert advice in that it is and had been the national accrediting body for para professional and professional level courses for many years. In addition, it sponsors or encourages specialist continuing professional activities suitable for all sectors of the industry and commissions and supports self-paced training packages which meet specifically identified training needs of people working in the library and information industry.
Criticisms of the Scheme

According to the ABS (1989), the small business sector reports the lowest expenditure in training, yet this group is excluded from the Act. Ian Spicer, from the Confederation of Australian Industry, sees that the Act provides for a “...costly and complex scheme involving all employers filling in forms and providing information to yet another government authority in order to encourage a small percentage of employers, employing an even smaller percentage of workers, to undertake training programs” (Spicer 1990, p. 9). He identifies the group which the Act will target as 6% of Australian enterprises, covering 21% of the workforce. In this group, those firms not providing any training employ only 11% of the total workforce.

Tim Blue saw the Act as imposing a potentially destructive levy on many small-to-medium sized businesses. He cites the fact that when the legislation was introduced, Price Waterhouse set up a national advisory service for the “disbelievers and the confused”. David Oliver, who headed this service, is quoted as saying that some industries will be “...hard put to find a way to spend their training obligations.” Blue illustrates by saying it cannot cost much to learn how to plug in a vacuum cleaner or empty a rubbish bin. Another problem for many industries which suffer cyclical swings of employment, such as the building industry, is that they are not allowed to run credits into the next year of spending (1990, p.76-77).

Lenore Taylor (1991, p.11) sees that “…for Mr. Dawkins the scheme is an act of faith essential to creating the nation’s productivity, to the success of the award restructuring program and the attaining of the coveted ‘clever country’ status”. The other main area of
criticism concerned the administrative and regulatory requirements. The strict record-keeping requirements for the purpose of ascertaining the employer’s taxation liability were seen by many industry commentators to be a headache.

Opinions differed as to whether the Act was a remedial, penal or taxing statute. Perhaps the best summation of the general cynicism surrounding the Scheme is provided by Bryan Pape (1991, p.21-24), who labels it coercive and fabricated legislation. He considers it invalid legislation for three reasons:

- it is simply too wide;
- it purports to regulate conduct, not to raise revenue; and
- it is a penalty compelling or guaranteeing the observance of a law beyond the legislative power of the Commonwealth.

The fact that the Scheme is currently in suspension is due to the general view that it was ineffective and open to abuse.

**Enterprise Bargaining**

This moves the focus from industry-wide awards to actual enterprise or workplace level. It has been argued that only by improving the performance of each worksite will true microeconomic reform occur. An enterprise is usually taken to mean a single business with a single employer.

Enterprise bargaining is defined in the *Australian Enterprise Bargaining Manual* (1993, p.3202) as:
...a contract between an employer and the employees on wages and conditions of work in the employer's business or undertaking, entered into freely. In reality, the parties often seek assistance from government agencies, employer's organisations, trade unions and other sources in concluding agreements.

In April 1991, when the principles of the 1989 wage decision were to be reviewed, employers, the government and the ACTU argued that wage increases should be achieved through the process of enterprise bargaining. However, because all parties differed in their approach to the introduction of this system, the Commission rejected their proposals and retained the existing system with some important changes, one of which was the re-wording of the structural efficiency principle to “...ensure that changes at the award level were reflected in changes at the enterprise level” (Australian Labour Law Reporter 1993, p.22086).

The Industrial Commission of N.S.W. in May 1991 adopted a new “Enterprise Arrangements Principle”, which was directed towards negotiation at the enterprise level and would take into consideration the “...needs of individual enterprises, businesses, undertakings or projects” (New South Wales State Wage Case 1991, p.22111). This decision by the Industrial Commission of N.S.W., together with the strong desire expressed by the Federal Government, employers and the ACTU to implement workplace bargaining, resulted in the adoption of an enterprise bargaining principle by the AIRC in the National Wage Case October 1991. The Commission considered the common elements of enterprise bargaining supported by all parties, the risks involved and recommended that:

- primary responsibility for success should be placed on the parties involved;
- parties abide by agreements for set terms;
• the Commission’s role be limited to conciliation and testing the substance of agreements reached; enterprise bargaining agreements be given equal status to awards. (*Australian Labour Law Reporter* 1991, p.22151)

The principles of the decision were:

...developed with the aim of providing, for their period of operation, a framework under which all concerned - employers, workers and their unions, governments and tribunals - can co-operate to ensure that measures to meet the competitive requirements of enterprises are positively examined and implemented in the interests of management, workers and, ultimately, Australian society (*The Australian Industrial Law Review* 1991, p.405).

This decision will pave the way for industrial relations to move from a centralised system to a more flexible enterprise bargaining system which, it is anticipated,
will deliver beneficial outcomes to employers, workers and the community as a whole.

It is this stage of award restructuring, the implementation of awards at the enterprise level, where change in the labour market will occur. Emphasis will be placed on “...on the job training and multi-skilling leading to greater pressures for job redesign.” (Ogden 1991, p.11).

It is at this stage that there is confusion and dissent as the various parties to agreements change their positions on centralised and decentralised wage fixing systems respectively. McKeon (1991, p.30) argues that the future of award restructuring is under threat and suggests that a period of “...industrial action, poor relations between employers and unions and a temporary suspension in the award restructuring movement” is imminent.

The ACTU’s position on the structural efficiency principle emphasises the importance of multi-skilling and broadbanding which will provide a skilled and productive workforce. It believes the AIRC should set minimum standards and then industry based unions can argue for productivity based payments at the enterprise level. Employers on the other hand, believe that pay increases should be related to the productivity of the individual enterprise and that individual employers should decide on work conditions and skills required for that enterprise.

Unions so far “...have tended to avoid the legislation because of the perception that it is aimed at breaking the union monopoly on setting legally enforceable conditions of employment... “ and in so doing, “...will be missing a significant opportunity to negotiate improved wages and conditions in return for improved productivity” (Harden 1992, p.105). Harden believes that, “The nature of enterprise agreements is such that both
parties must reach a consensus on change, and this is sometimes beyond the capacity or will of the parties.” (1992, p.105)

In a pamphlet, Enterprise Bargaining and Workplace Reform, Teece (1993a, pp. 2-3) explains that bargaining allows all employment conditions and work practices to be reviewed at a local level. Enterprise bargaining encourages management and their employees to take full responsibility for their own arrangements. They are expected to work out together what changes are necessary to improve the productivity of their organisation.

Another pamphlet in this series (Teece 1993b), stresses the need for managers and workers to work closely together in negotiating the wages and conditions which will bring about the required changes in efficiency and productivity. This point is stressed by Teece in his review of an American book, Negotiating the Future: A Labor Perspective on American Business, which argues “... that the way we organise work inside organisations will be the real determinant of productivity performance” (1993c, p.17).

Enterprise bargaining does allow for wholesale change but it must take place within a legal framework. It is now included in the laws of all six States and the Commonwealth. These frameworks can be of two types:

- Enterprise Flexibility Agreements or
- Enterprise Bargaining Framework Agreements.

In the former, an employer negotiates directly with the employees. In the latter, the employer negotiates directly with the unions. Where enterprise bargaining has
commenced within the university sector, the University administrations are bargaining directly with their unions who have formed single bargaining units. The key features of these Framework Agreements are that both employers and unions have agreed to bargain on issues of real substance; both have agreed that enterprise bargaining is about workplace reform and increased productivity; and there has also been agreement that there will be no disadvantage to the employee compared with his or her previous award.

Once enterprise bargaining is entered into, employees must understand that it is the only way to get a pay rise. A 2.9% payrise is granted under the framework agreement. After this, future pay rises have to be funded from within the enterprise. In other words, productivity increases are seen as the means of generating greater profits which are shared by all. In non profit organisations, such as state libraries and universities, this must be seen in terms of benefits rather than profits. Although in the short term organisations may look to cost cutting, downsizing (or right sizing), tradeoffs and one-off gains, the longer term bargaining environment might address strategic goals, best practice, benchmarking, agreed performance indicators and changes in workplace culture.

Enterprise bargaining is intended to open up a wide range of employment matters for negotiation. But every system is bound by legal minimum standards which an enterprise agreement must at least match. So while enterprise bargaining can produce conditions above the minimum, it cannot reduce the minimum terms prescribed by law. Areas commonly negotiated in enterprise bargaining are salaries, working hours, annual leave, long-service leave, sick leave, parental leave, superannuation and equal employment
opportunity (Teece 1993a, pp.4-5). In the future, training may well be used as a point of negotiation too.

A dual system, based on voluntary opting out, can be a good policy if the arrangement is essentially transitional. Awards continue in an interim way, with the focus on enterprise bargaining. In the meantime, awards are transformed to become mere vehicles for safety-net wages and conditions. Unfortunately, there has been a definite lack of progress on this score. Rather, awards remain largely intact in number and substance, with some key unions, as, for example, the Australian Nurses Federation and the Transport Workers Union, still bitterly opposed to any major change in their operation.

Teece (1993b) also points out the problems negotiations at the workplace level will entail for those employed in library settings. As noted earlier by McKeon (1991, p.30), library staff are covered by over 60 awards and represent only a small proportion of the membership in any one union. “Lack of strong trade union support could be a significant difficulty for many in enterprise bargaining” (Teece 1993b). The problems for part-time and casual staff are even more pronounced. Another difficulty associated with enterprise bargaining, according to Teece, is that, “Librarians are part of the service sector where it is much more difficult to demonstrate efficiency increases” (1993b).

This problem is also addressed by Eastwood (1992, p.3) who, in an article on the relevance of enterprise bargaining to the public sector, comments that, “Productivity measurement is largely a market based approach to labour management.” She goes on to state that, “In the development of suitable performance indicators, the quality of provision of service must be the prime consideration, not cost minimisation” (1992, p.3).
Kennedy (1992, p.1), while stating that enterprise bargaining is “...the forum for industrial relations in the 1990s...”, raises some interesting concerns in relation to the basis on which performance is measured, and sees two extremely different performance indicators being applied. He claims that the performance of company executives is measured by market share increases and/or relativity to the salary levels of executives in Western Europe, America and Japan, while the performance of Australian workers is compared to that of “…the so-called ‘tiger economies’ of Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan and South Korea” (1993, p.3). A fascinating comparison!

Nevertheless, enterprise bargaining is seen as an opportunity to “…introduce new concepts into formal conditions of employment...” and to provide “…the chance to address issues which go beyond traditional award entitlements. It is in this area especially that gains can be made by employees’” (Teece 1993b). Positive outcomes such as participation in management, access to more varied and interesting jobs provided by multi-skilling and broadbanding, and career path development, can be achieved provided there is commitment from all parties involved. Enterprise bargaining is a measure of micro-economic reform which will assist in improving Australia’s comparatively weak competitive position (Harden 1992, p.105).

Summary

The national economic, political, educational and industrial imperatives driving award restructuring, the Training Guarantee Scheme, enterprise bargaining and the NTRA and in particular, industry competency standards and competency-based training, have impacted widely on the Australian community including the secondary school and TAFE
sectors and private industry. This study endeavours to ascertain to what degree these external influences have affected the human resource management and in particular, staff development programs in state and academic libraries. The literature relating to staff development and training in libraries is discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER THREE

STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN LIBRARIES

Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to examine large scale industrial change with its underpinning economic and educational imperatives on staff development in Australian academic and state libraries. The previous chapter reported the findings of a literature search on the NTRA, the TGA and workplace rearrangement and, in so doing, addressed aspects of Australian political, industrial, economic and educational policies which have the potential to impact on the design, delivery, evaluation and resourcing of staff training and development in libraries. The following figure provides a means of summarising these external influences and illustrating their interrelationships. As it is currently in suspension, the Training Guarantee Act has been omitted from diagram 3.1.
Figure 3.1: External factors which may impact on staff development in libraries

Before examining whether or not these external factors have had any impact on staff development and human resources management in state and academic libraries (Chapters 5, 6 and 7), this chapter focusses on staff development as it relates to libraries and discusses the role of staff development as a means of a library achieving its goals. First the term “staff development” is defined, then the importance of correctly identifying staff development needs is addressed, as is the role of staff development in motivating employees and securing their commitment. Methods of delivering and evaluating staff development are discussed along with the importance of staff
development as a means of effecting organisational change and meeting rising client expectations.

**Staff development - definition**

The literature abounds with many and varied definitions of staff development. Nicholson (1992, p. 259) broadly defines it as “...the way in which members of our profession maintain, acquire and enhance their knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform effectively.”

Among the most prominent reasons given for the importance of staff development in the current literature is the need for library and information staff to be up-to-date.

The rate of change in information technology and its impact on libraries make it important for the recent graduate to realise that much of what was learned in professional library school will soon be obsolete. (Weingand 1991, p.266)

Social, technological, scientific and other forms of change are rendering knowledge and skills obtained [at initial training] obsolete at an increasingly rapid rate. (Roberts and Konn 1989 p.110)

Although obsolescence is a major factor, if used judiciously, staff development also serves to promote high morale, a sense of self-worth and career path opportunities for staff within libraries. In her definition Austen (1990, p.73) adds a further dimension to the concept of staff development by including “...policies, procedures and activities providing a framework within which staff can develop in terms of their professional needs and aspirations.” Willems (1990, p.56) acknowledges that staff development should be concerned with skill development, organisational commitment and career
enhancement. He further asserts that “...staff development is about growth in self
development and the development of a positive self concept.”

Definitions of staff development may vary among writers, however, there is
overwhelming agreement concerning the importance of staff development in terms of
benefits to the organisation and to the individual. Austen (1990, p.73) sees staff
development taking place “...in a manner which harmonises...individual needs with the
existing and anticipated needs of the organisation.” This position is supported by Jurow
(1992, p.10) who sees staff development as a “partnership” between the organisation
and the individual and states “...that programs focusing on an individual's ability to
operate effectively in the work environment be seen as a partnership, a joint
responsibility of the library and the individual involved.” She sees staff development
within the workplace as a part of the broader function of human resource management.

Many writers acknowledge the need to distinguish between continuous education and
staff development. Similarly staff development and training are independently defined
with training seen as an aspect of staff development. The need for continuous learning
experiences in the professional context is stressed by Shaughnessy (1992, p.285). He
makes the distinction between continuing education, which he sees as catering for the
needs of individuals “...to improve performance...and enrich careers,” and professional
staff development which “...is much more directly tied..., to the organisation’s corporate
strategy for dealing with change.” A further distinction is made between training, which is
seen as directly task oriented and concerned with the development of skills, and
professional development activities which “...lead to a more informed and professionally competent staff” (1992, p.284).

Casteleyn and Webb also make the distinction between training and development. They see training as concerned with the acquisition of job related skills which may be seen as “...a series of short, clearly defined modules.” Whereas, staff development is regarded as “...a lifelong process contributing to personal, as well as work related advancement”(1993, p.134).

This important distinction between staff development and training is supported by ALIA. In their “Guidelines on Staff Training and Development”, which can be found in Staff Development in Australian Libraries (December, 1992) staff development is defined as “...a systematic effort intended to enhance the library’s capacity to realise its resources.”

As a part of the staff development program

Training...is designed to provide ...on-the-job training for staff who have been newly appointed to a position, require further training to enable them to carry out new duties as part of their current position and/or require further training to improve their expertise in their current position (December 1992, p.11).

Accepting the relationship between staff development and training and the necessarily wide range of associated activities and influences, the current literature reflects the need for staff development and training to be viewed in terms of the total development structure of the organisation. As stated by Williamson (1990, p.28), “The integration of staff training and development into the total human resources management program is... essential.” Willems (1990, p.55) also emphasises this and sees staff development as crucial “...for developing commitment to the organisation, its objectives and culture.”
Bradley, Kallick and Regan (1991, p.3) state that staff development is: “...any systematic attempt to affect professional practices, beliefs and understandings of such persons towards an announced goal’.

The important aspect of this definition is that training and development in libraries should be planned and developed in the context of the library’s (and parent organisation’s) goals. Staff development needs to be tied in with both action/operational and strategic plans if it is to be effective. Furthermore, the introduction of competency standards for the industry may well have far reaching repercussions for the way in which staff development is delivered and assessed.

**Policy Development and Planning**

The assertion by Willems (1990) that staff development and training is necessary to develop commitment to the objectives of an organisation gives rise to the need for professional development, which is of direct relevance to performance in the work environment, to be related to the strategic plan of the organisation. As stated by McGregor (1990, p.74) “Staff development is considered as one of the major staffing strategies in an organisation’s corporate or strategic plan”. Ralli (1990, p.300) supports this view but takes the argument further. He sees the need for the strategic planning process to include all members of the organisation, therefore creating a sense of “ownership” and consequently a “...better...linkage of performance to the plan...”.

There is general agreement that all members of an organisation must be involved in the decision making process in order for it to operate effectively and efficiently. The
development and operation of a staff development program is an integral part of this process and widespread involvement of staff at all levels is crucial for it to succeed. Staff development and training requires careful planning and attention and, as such, a written staff development policy should be a vital part of the strategic planning context.

In her definition Austen (1990) acknowledges the need for policies and procedures to be included as part of the staff development process. Trahn (1990, p.20) also sees the development of a written staff development policy as “...a keystone in general library policy...” However, written policies must be acted upon and it is the integration of staff development strategies as a readily accepted part of organisational processes and the organisational culture that is “...the real...living staff development policy” (Trahn 1990, p.20). The current literature indicates that staff development is increasingly seen as part of the strategic planning process in Australian academic libraries.

**Evaluation and Needs Assessment**

To be effective, “Staff development programs and activities must be firmly grounded in identified needs” (Austen 1990, p.71). Needs analysis should occur at two levels. At the organisational level, a skills audit or “...systematic analysis of what skills and competencies exist within the organisation” should be conducted (Bridgland 1993, p.10). This is essential in order to identify the future needs of the organisation and is considered “...crucial if staff development is to be relevant to attaining the library’s strategic plan” (1993, p.10). At the individual level, the most widely accepted method in the literature is by way of performance appraisal as it is seen as having “...the advantage of immediacy and relevance” (McGregor 1990, p.75). As stated by Austen (1990) it
also has an advantage over more traditional methods of assessment as it focuses on future performance, improvement in a positive sense, and not in terms of unsatisfactory performance.

Staff appraisal is increasingly recognised as an important component in employee relations; better communication leads to improved staff motivation and this in turn leads to better service for the library user (Casteleyn & Webb 1993, p.55).

McGregor sees performance appraisal as more than a means of identifying areas of need, but as a “...vehicle for staff development” (1990, p.75). Four major features of the appraisal process are examined and are seen as determining staff development needs, assessing the success of development activities, acting as a staff development exercise in itself and as a means of retaining perspective in the staff development program so that it is seen as “...improving performance, not as a ‘right’ to be enjoyed by all staff” (McGregor 1990, p.75).

The importance of a successful, well prepared performance appraisal procedure in terms of staff motivation, as a basis for career advancement and improved communication, is commonly accepted. However, the skill of the supervisor in handling the process, the attitude of staff and the outcomes of the process in terms of performance must all be carefully considered. McGregor (1990, p.75) observes that “...unlike staff development,... performance appraisal has not been universally accepted by libraries”. However, as a result of the Full Bench decision of 23 July 1992, regarding academic institutions “...there [is] to be on a trial basis for twelve months, a system of compulsory regular staff appraisal for staff development purposes” (Currie 1992, p.20).
Staff development programs themselves need to be regularly evaluated to ensure that they are meeting desired objectives. According to McGregor (1990, p.74):

Staff development is considered as one of the major staffing strategies in an organisation’s corporate or strategic plan. It should be evaluated, therefore, in the same way as other elements of the plan, that is, are the benefits sufficient to justify the cost? Alternatively, is this strategy contributing sufficiently to the performance of individual staff members and of the organisation as a whole. How does it contribute to the achievement of the organisation’s stated objectives?

In *Staff Development in Australian Libraries* the “ALIA Guidelines on Staff Training and Development” stress the need for continuous monitoring, evaluation and review of staff development and training. Evaluation is seen as assessing “the total value of staff development and training in both social and financial terms. Cost benefit is an important consideration (December 1992, p.16).

Smith (1992) also sees evaluation as a continuous process providing current information regarding staff development and its success, thus forming a basis for further planning and decision making. Throughout the literature, evaluation is seen as an integral part of staff development programs and activities.

Without evaluation, staff development runs the risk of being ad hoc, lacking direction and occurring in isolation without having any meaning or relevance for either the recipient or the library (Bridgland 1990, p.70).

**Motivation and Commitment**

The issues of commitment, job satisfaction and motivation are inextricably linked and essential ingredients for the attainment of organisational and personal objectives through
successful professional staff development programs. Nicholson (1992, p.262) stresses the importance of motivation of the individual and states that for librarians to be motivated and committed to initiating and undertaking professional development activities “...encouragement and support from their employers and the profession is a key factor”.

Shaughnessy (1992, p.286), among others, stresses the need for organisational commitment, in terms of administrative support and recognition of professional development, in order to create “...an environment in which staff development is valued and facilitated”. Such organisational commitment adds legitimacy to the program and serves to motivate staff to become involved and in turn provide the necessary personal commitment.

As stated by Casteleyn & Webb (1993), involving individual staff in the total process of needs assessment, setting objectives, selecting appropriate training methods and gaining and providing feedback within the organisation encourages enthusiasm and motivation, therefore, the likelihood of total commitment to the process. This view is supported by Carver who states that “...motivation is greater ...if the program is closely matched to the participant’s needs” (1992, p.7). This is only achieved if individual staff are fully involved in the developmental process. Wainwright links professional development to the important issue of job satisfaction and its association with motivation and productivity. He sees both the organisation and the individual employee as responsible for the achievement of job satisfaction. In the current industrial climate the need for the organisation to commit to the professional growth of employees is regarded as essential,
therefore, “...through provision of training and participative processes, productivity in organisations will increase” (1991, p.62).

**Responsibilities**

Traditionally, professional skill acquisition has been a pre employment activity with the responsibility resting with the individual (Willems 1990, p.57).

This traditional view of the individual as totally responsible for his/her professional development is no longer accepted nor acceptable and, in some industries, the national training reform agenda has possibly been influential in changing this view. While the individual has an important part to play in the developmental process and must accept some responsibility for his/her own professional development, the ultimate responsibility for staff development and training is widely accepted as belonging to the organisation.

Coffey’s argument in support of this is presented by Nicholson (1992, p.259) and states that while it is the individual’s responsibility to perform appointed tasks “...the organisation also has responsibility for developing the competence of staff to enable them to perform effectively.” This view is supported by ALIA which sees staff development as “...primarily the responsibility of the library.” Furthermore, “...support by employers for staff training and development directly related to organisational goals is essential” *Staff Development in Australian Libraries* (December 1992, p.11).

ALIA also clearly emphasises the need for a structured approach to staff development and training and specifies the roles of the various parties responsible for the development and implementation of an effective program. Those seen as responsible are
senior managers, supervisors, the staff development officer and the staff development committee/group.

The role of the staff development committee is seen as advising and assisting in the planning and implementation of staff development and training for the organisation and should represent all sections of the library.

There is evidence that a number of Australian academic and state libraries are now embracing this concept of planned staff development and training, with a number of staff development librarians and committees being appointed in these institutions. The role and commitment of management, which includes the parent organisation and the chief librarian, is viewed by all writers as being of critical importance to the success of any staff development program.

While all responsible parties have an important role to play in the process and the need for commitment at all levels of the organisation is acknowledged, it is management who has the ultimate responsibility for personnel within the organisation and consequently their work-related professional development and skill acquisition. The National Board of Employment, Education and Training Higher Education Council’s report on *Library Provision in Higher Education Institutions* (1990) addresses the education and training of academic library staff, which is the role of management in the staff development process. Several pertinent features directly related to the staff of Australian academic libraries are outlined including the fact that “...relatively few library managers have any formal training in management” (1990, p.83).
The issue then arises that if library managers are not adequately trained themselves this may have implications regarding their effectiveness as managers and, consequently, their ability to recognise the needs of staff and ensure adequate professional development activities for them. Recognising the need for management training, the report recommends:

An integrated staff development program [in academic libraries] should first take account of the general needs of specific groups such as senior management, future management, potential middle managers and supervisors (1990, p.85).

The report makes recommendations as to appropriate training and development activities. These include exchange programs, which are seen as particularly valuable for senior management, and opportunities for professional work in commercial organisations and companies.

The importance of ongoing training and development for library managers is recognised by Casteleyn & Webb, whose book *Promoting Excellence: Personnel Management and Staff Development in Libraries* is designed for senior library and information service personnel to assist them to become more effective human resource managers. They conclude that:

In the hands of an effective manager, continuing professional development will ensure not only the manager’s personal development but also that of all their staff, as well as the long term development and success of the service (1993, p.227).

While senior management has ultimate responsibility for human resource management the role of supervisors is no less important. They are responsible for ensuring that appropriate staff training and development is delivered to all staff in their particular work
unit and that this training has an effect on job performance. The need for appropriate training of supervisors is widely addressed in the current literature and seen as extremely important to the success of personnel development. As stated by McGregor:

Supervisors who lack the skills needed to train, appraise and motivate staff can undermine the effectiveness of almost all management strategies (1990, p.77).

This is supported in the *Library Provision in Higher Education Institutions* (1990) report, as is the need for a trained staff development officer.

The functions of such an officer would be to weigh the training needs of the library’s staff against the library’s planning and management processes, and to ensure that staff are indeed trained or retrained as required, and in time to carry out roles dictated by the library’s forward planning (1990, p.85).

The report sees training for staff at all levels as crucial and states that: “the provision of structured staff training [is] singularly important for the libraries of the future” (1990, p.85).

The importance of training is also stressed by McKeon who looks at training in terms of the need for “...a more highly skilled workforce” (1990, p.124). In terms of the implications of multi-skilling he sees the need for:

...substantial changes in the provision of training ...Award restructuring recognises that entry skills are not good enough by themselves. Reskilling and continuing education must gain increased emphasis. It will be a job for the manager to obtain access to training opportunities for themselves and their staff (1990, p.124).
For libraries and their staff this means a need for continuous, relevant staff development opportunities aligned to their strategic plan, incorporating a variety of programs and activities.

**Methods and Nature of Training**

Three commonly recognised avenues of staff development and training are outlined by Nicholson (1991). On-the-job training is probably the most frequently used form and requires the identification and subsequent training of personnel to act as trainers and conduct training sessions. Planned in-house programs may take a variety of forms such as, total library programs or programs catering for specific skills. Such training “...can be undertaken by in-house experts, specialist training consultants, vendors, external courses, seminars and conferences” (1991, p.37). Training external to the library pertains to courses offered by a range of training providers, commercial and public.

Staff development programs in libraries most frequently incorporate on-the-job and in-house training activities as a means of facilitating valuable skill development and transfer. Delivery methods for training and development activities are provided by Nicholson (1992). These include short courses and conferences, co-operative ventures, exchanges, internships, mentoring, visits and personal networking.

**Staff Development Priorities**

Shaughnessy (1992) suggests that increasingly time constraints and need influence the choice of options in staff development resulting in “... greater reliance on workshops, short courses and library sponsored events simply because of increasing job demands”
Dyckman (1992) suggests that in order to provide increased opportunities for staff development “...libraries will use more in house talent to train, requiring staff who attend outside workshops to bring back the information and help train others” (1992, p.88).

The apparent preference for on-the-job and in-house training approaches to staff development and training is widely reflected in the literature, with time and cost seen as factors having most influence. As stated by Nicholson “…the recessionary economic environment has required emphasis by employers on costs, productivity and value for money” (1992, p.259). Award restructuring and its implications for libraries reflects this situation.

Jurow (1992) sees three key areas that should be addressed by libraries when developing training programs. Technology training and education is seen as necessary to equip staff to manage technological change and to support and improve the effectiveness of the organisation. The development of skills in interpersonal relations is seen as becoming increasingly important as the work environment becomes more interdependent resulting in the need to work with and influence others. The changing nature of the concept of leadership is seen as a need to be addressed in terms of a shift in the idea of leadership as a management role to more “…personal responsibility for meaningful, creative change in the workplace” (1992, p.14).

Bridgland (1993) also supports this view and sees changes to work organisation and new technology “…demanding a change in the mix of skills which an individual needs to acquire” (1993, p.7). As well as interpersonal and leadership skills “…higher level
cognitive and problem solving skills...combined with the more traditional motor skills” are seen as becoming increasingly important (1993, p.7).

The increasing importance of these areas of staff development and training are supported by the results of a survey distributed by the ALIA Board of Education. The survey was designed to establish areas of need in professional development and findings, outlined by Kenchington (1991) found in Nicholson (1992) state that “…major areas of demand…[are] information access, automation, management, personal development and tools of the trade” (1992, p.259).

A recurring theme in the literature is the need for change and flexibility. However, “…for change to occur as a result of professional development the individual has to be prepared to change” (Nicholson 1992, p.259). He/she must be motivated and see the need for change. As stated by Jurow (1992) much of the change occurring today, and in the future, “…is imposed” (1992, p.15). Therefore, the individual or organisation has little control in this situation. This has important implications for library managers and their management of human resources.

Library administrators, managers and trainers need to work together to ensure that staff development programs include strategies that facilitate change. Training programs which encourage flexibility and adaptation are as critical as supervisory training. Librarians must learn to manage change as effectively as they manage people (Weaver-Meyers 1992, p.12).

Jurow (1992) also stresses the importance of flexibility and the need to be able to respond quickly to changing conditions. The need for personnel to be able to function in a changing environment is seen as the greatest challenge facing academic libraries with a
need to constantly update the knowledge and skills of personnel “...as the nature of the work and the library as an institution change” (1992, p.16). The need for the involvement of staff in the process of planning for change is stressed by Weaver-Meyers (1992) in order to produce well trained, supportive staff and in enabling libraries to cope with the new developments transforming the library profession.

**Future Issues for Staff Development**

Changes in government policy resulting in award restructuring, the structural efficiency principle (SEP) and the resultant focus on multi-skilling and competency standards have resulted in a climate of uncertainty and confusion within the library profession. Added to this are the budgetary constraints resulting from the current recessionary climate and continual advances in information technology which require constant investment in new hardware, software and retraining.

The necessity for staff development and training programs to equip organisations and their staffs to meet these changes is documented. However, the emphasis on productivity and quality of service and resources sees an “...urgent need for libraries to justify their contribution and value” (Nicholson 1992, p.259). This view is supported by Henderson (1992) who reports a decline in the importance placed on libraries in higher education institutions by the Federal Government and includes Oakshott’s (1992) analysis of current government thinking which shows that “...libraries are being neglected at the national level” (1992, p.145).
This, as well as the trend towards funding allocation being increasingly determined by performance, suggests a need for a “...move away from the old models and paradigms of librarianship” (1992, p.147). In the academic library setting the issue is then raised as to how this change can be implemented without affecting “...the rights of fee paying students” (1992, p.147). The move away from the traditional view of “...the academic librarian... tied to the library’s collections” is supported by Moore (1992, p.252). She discusses an innovative approach to academic librarianship trialled at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) libraries, which has librarians working in several different disciplines, in re-designed library positions. This model of cross functional, “customer-focussed” teams of library staff is becoming increasingly attractive as more and more academic libraries in Australia adopt quality management principles.

Another issue of importance is the increased sophistication and expectations of library users. This is addressed by Nicholson (1992) who also sees a need for increased professional development in areas relating to delivery of service, such as communications and marketing.

Line (1991) supports this view and stresses a need to consider the implications of increased user awareness of technologies and information access. He states that “...developments in the private information sector are perhaps leading people to have greater expectations of service” (1991, p.98).

Moore (1992) also has a strong opinion in this area and raises the issue of the quality of library service, with regard to quality management and strategic planning. The importance of this subject for academic libraries, in an era of increasing competition in
the area of supply of information products, is stressed. Libraries must be able to compete with other information suppliers in providing access to information. It is imperative that this area be addressed in training and development programs.

Nicholson (1992) sees the need to consider our position as an Asian nation. The resultant effects on initial courses and professional development programs is regarded as an increasingly important issue for the profession. Another important area of concern is that of consideration for the needs of rural and isolated members of the profession. This is discussed by Williamson (1990) and Bridgland (1993). The contribution of professional literature to staff development and training, as well as technological advances which can improve access to training for those in remote areas, are discussed in terms of the “...principle of flexible delivery of training” (1993, p.15). Some institutions are already addressing this issue, as is the ALIA Board of Education.

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institutions are already addressing this issue, as is the ALIA Board of Education.

The importance of staff development and training as a means of career advancement
and promotion is addressed by Ladd (1992). Bridgland (1993) discusses the need for
realistic career path alternatives. At present, the career structure for library technicians is
limited, so that qualification as a librarian is the only viable promotion option. Similarly,
librarians who wish to advance must pursue a management direction, to which all
librarians may not be suited or interested. There is a need for "...alternative career paths for professional and technical specialists which encourage them to remain within their areas of expertise" (1993, p.9). The necessary features of these alternative structures and the implications for staff development need to be carefully considered by both employers and the profession.

Effective staff development and training would appear to be viewed with increasing importance in the present climate. Dyckman (1992, p.88) sees "...systematic training and professional development of all staff..." as a necessity for the library profession. This view is supported by many writers, including Jurow (1992, p.5), who sees staff development as a crucial issue in academic and research libraries and stresses the "...growing recognition of the key role staff play in the success of an organisation." To meet the challenges of the future "...a much larger investment in staff training and development and organisational development will be necessary to create and support the value systems and cultures required..." (1992, p.16).

Summary

The changing nature of work and the need to make Australia more internationally competitive economically resulted in two microeconomic reforms, both based on skilling the nation. The NTRA was designed to deliver industry responsive curricula and to create nationally consistent approach to training delivery; award restructuring was designed to streamline and update existing awards so as to improve productivity and to provide improved career path opportunities for Australian workers. The need for improved staff development and training in libraries is compatible with both of these
reforms.

Based on the literature review findings and on selected policy documents, this study investigated whether or not economic reforms had influenced or impacted upon the way in which staff development programs were conceived, designed, implemented and evaluated in Australian academic and state libraries. The research design and methodology used to do so are discussed in the next chapter, and the results of the two questionnaires and the outcomes of the interviews are discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research design and methodology for the study. The review of the literature was instrumental in the formulation of the areas to be investigated. For example, the question of whether alternative career paths can be established for library technicians was examined from the viewpoint of opportunities afforded by award restructuring and industry competency standards. In theory, both of these should remove the necessity for library technicians to further qualify as professional librarians in order to advance. Also explored were the effects on library training programs of skill developments required by the SEP and the potential impact of national industry competency standards on staff development and training in Australian state and academic libraries.

The level of knowledge of those responsible for staff development and training in these libraries was another important factor - how much did they know about industrial issues such as enterprise bargaining, or of training design principles as set forth in the NFROT? To what extent, if any, had the TGA impacted on Australian state and academic libraries and had the legislation proved beneficial? How much was known of industry competency standards and how they might be applied in these libraries? Did commonly used terms, such as staff development and training, mean the same thing to respondents?
To what extent did library resources support and reinforce the importance of staff development and training and did management use it as a tool to achieve strategic outcomes for their libraries? These questions formed the basis of the research questions which are discussed below.

The chapter comprises three sections. In the first, the specific research questions which were shaped by identifying issues significant to the practice of librarianship are reiterated. It was hoped that if the research provided answers to these questions, gaps in the knowledge base of librarianship practice could be filled. The conceptual framework for the study is also presented and discussed in this section. The framework was used to categorise the components of the research and guided data collection and analysis. The second section describes the research design and its rationale. The third section outlines the methodological approach, means of data collection and strategies for data analysis.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

From consideration of the issues addressed in Chapter One, the purpose of the study was to examine the impact of large scale industrial change, with its underpinning economic and educational imperatives, on staff development in Australian academic and state libraries. Specifically, the research was intended to determine the impact of workplace rearrangement and national training reform on staff development in these libraries. From the researcher’s knowledge of current practice and from an extensive literature review, four research questions emerged:
1. Have the concepts of workplace rearrangement, the Training Guarantee Act and the National Training Reform Agenda affected the design, implementation and evaluation of staff development programs in Australian academic and state libraries?

2. What do those responsible for staff development in Australian academic and state libraries know/understand of workplace rearrangement, the TGA and the NTRA?

3. Have the education and training principles of workplace rearrangement and the NTRA been incorporated into staff development programs in Australian academic and state libraries?

4. What do those responsible for staff development in Australian academic and state libraries understand the term “staff development” to mean?

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

In order to collect data which might help answer the above research questions, it was necessary to order and group the major component parts or arenas of the research topic and to identify the relationships among them. The result is shown diagrammatically in Figure 4.1.
Figure 4.1 Conceptual framework

AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

### A. MICROECONOMIC REFORM

**Elements**  
A1  
Industrial Arena - workplace rearrangement  
Award restructuring  
Enterprise bargaining  

A2  
National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA)  
TGA  
Competency standards  
Competency-based training  
Australian Standards Framework  
National Framework for the Recognition of Training

### B. STATE & ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

**Elements**  
B1  
Demographics  
Size  
Location  

B2  
Staff Development in relation to:  
Strategic plans  
Management policies  
Resources  
Practice vs Theory  
Human Resources

### C. IMPACT

**Elements**  
C1  
Knowledge and application of A1 by B  
Do academic and state libraries know about award restructuring and enterprise bargaining?  
Have these libraries any experience of award restructuring (SEP) and enterprise bargaining?  

C2  
Knowledge and application of A2 to B  
To what extent do academic and state libraries understand the concepts embodied in the NTRA?  
Is there evidence of NFROT principles (including recognition of prior learning) impacting on design and delivery of staff development in these libraries?  
Is there evidence of other aspects of the NTRA (e.g., competency and CBT standards) impacting on design and delivery of staff development in these libraries?  
Is there evidence of the TGA having had any impact on staff development in these libraries?  

C3  
Are there differences between academic and state libraries?  

C4  
Evidence of rate of diffusion of microeconomic reform strategies in academic and state libraries.  
Relationship between the alignment of state and federal politics with the uptake rate of A1 and A2 by B1.

Figure 4.1 depicts the two major arenas under examination within the broader Australian political operating environment. Arena A is that of the federal government’s
key microeconomic reform initiatives, namely workplace rearrangement practices (A1) including award restructuring and enterprise bargaining and national training reforms (A2) such as the Training Guarantee Act (TGA), competency standards, competency-based training (CBT), the Australian Standards Framework (ASF) and the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT).

Data for this arena were gathered from a number of sources:

- the information provided by government;
- the information provided by unions;
- legislation;
- information provided by and working with the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA); and
- information provided by and working with the industry training advisory body, Arts Training Australia (ATA) which is now known as CREATE.

This information was analysed and synthesised and subsequently used to explain the research topic to colleagues and to formulate questions for the questionnaire.

Arena B is that of Australian academic and state libraries. Much information is available in public documentation such as annual reports and published survey data such as that published annually by the Council of Australian University Librarians comparing aspects of Australian academic libraries such as staff numbers, collection sizes, budgets etc. Data from these was supplemented in some cases with in-house documentation such as staff development policies, award restructuring documentation and classification structures. The researcher’s knowledge of both library sectors also guided data
collection. Although many statistics concerning size of library (number of students served, number of staff employed etc.) were available from published sources, the questionnaire asked respondents to provide this information as it would be more up-to-date. What was not able to be ascertained from public documents was information of a procedural and policy nature concerning each library’s view of its staff development programs and practice. The questionnaire sought information on these elements of Arena B.

The research then needed to examine these two arenas to determine whether there was any perceptible impact of Arena A on Arena B. For example, was there any demonstrated knowledge of the industrial or national training reforms in either or both the academic or state library sectors? Was there any evidence of any elements of the industrial or training reforms having an impact on staff development design, implementation or evaluation? In other words, data needed to be gathered to determine if any of the elements of workplace rearrangement or national training reform were being applied to or were having any impact on staff development in academic and/or state libraries? If so, were there any discernible differences between different types of library or between libraries within the same sector but in different geographic locations? Did alignment of federal and state politics have a bearing on the rate of reform adoption? Furthermore, were there variances between libraries of different size? The questionnaire and the interviews, as well as the examination of a small number of library policy statements were intended to supply information on these questions. Also, from a change theory perspective, the researcher was interested to see if the rate of dissemination and
adoption of the changes brought about by the adoption of workplace rearrangement and the national training reform agenda were speedy and effective. The repetition of the survey after a year’s interval was an attempt to gauge this.

**RESEARCH DESIGN AND ITS RATIONALE**

Rather than a sample, both surveys covered the total population of academic and state and territory libraries in Australia. The surveys provide insight as to what was occurring and changing in two sectors of the industry at a particular point in time, as well as to what was not happening. As total populations were used in each case, data are used to produce frequency distributions. Thus tests for significance in samples, such as chi-squared, have not been used. The population for the second survey was virtually identical to the first (only three institutions were “lost” in the second, and two of these were due to amalgamations in the academic sector). Hence testing to determine statistical differences in patterns of response is not necessary.

**Preliminary Study**

The genesis of the research was a narrowly defined, exploratory study undertaken in the latter half of 1991 in which a small, proportionally representative sample of Victorian academic libraries was examined to determine its:
• awareness of the 1990 Training Guarantee Act (TGA);

• staff development policies and practices; and

• whether the TGA had had any impact.

The pilot study data, as well as anecdotal evidence, were collected during the last six months of 1991. Interviews conducted with staff development personnel and/or chief librarians at the Australian National University, the University of Canberra, Griffith and Queensland Universities and the Queensland University of Technology as well as the State Library of Queensland indicated the value of broadening the investigation to include some academic libraries from other states, as there appeared to be regional differences, and also to include libraries of another type, as an interview with the Senior Professional Development Officer of the State Library of Queensland indicated that the State Government in Queensland was further advanced in award restructuring than the academic libraries in that State. At the time of the interview, the State Library was about to incorporate the basic philosophy of award restructuring and the TGA into the library’s human resources development plans.

The conclusion drawn from the preliminary study was that the TGA had minimal impact on staff development policies and practices at that time. Reasons given were that the TGA lacked specific guidelines for program content, supplied inadequate provisions for the enforcement of improvements in staff development programs, and that it concentrated on financial commitment of the employer organisation, rather than on operational units within it.
As a result of this preliminary study, it was decided to broaden the base of the investigation to include the two complementary microeconomic reform initiatives of the federal government, namely, workplace rearrangement (award restructuring and enterprise bargaining) and the national training reform agenda, and their impact, if any, on staff development in Australian academic libraries. A comparison with what was happening in libraries from another sector was also of interest. State and territory libraries were chosen as they were comparable in terms of size and complexity. Their small number meant that once again the total population could be surveyed. This was to be achieved in a number of ways. Two surveys of Australian academic and state libraries were to be undertaken, a year apart. An extensive review of the literature would be undertaken. Accounts from government and pertinent government bodies, such as the National Training Board, other industry sectors as well as libraries, and commentaries on government policies pertaining to workplace rearrangement and the NTRA were of particular interest. The methodology would also include an analysis of policy related documents, such as the intended use of NFROT by accredited training providers, the intended use of competency standards in the ALIA’s continuing education programs and library staff development policies. In addition to the collection of survey data, a qualitative dimension would be added through a small number of interviews. These would serve to amplify the survey responses and permit a phenomenological investigation of the term, “staff development”.
FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE

The first, self-administered questionnaire was compiled on the knowledge gained as a result of a literature review and interviews with staff development librarians and personnel managers from state and academic libraries in Queensland and Victoria (as mentioned above). The conceptual framework was used to categorise the data for the questionnaire and addressed four specific areas, namely:

• effects, current or anticipated, of skill developments required by the structural efficiency principle on training programs;
• potential impact of national competencies for the library and information services industry on staff development and training;
• potential impact of enterprise bargaining;
• impact, if any, of the Training Guarantee Act on staff training.

Using the conceptual framework as a guide, the questionnaire also sought to ascertain the:

• level of the respondent’s knowledge of award restructuring and enterprise bargaining and competency standards;
• level of respondent’s knowledge of the TGA;
• impact of the above on staff development programs, e.g., increased focus on competency training;
• qualifications and training of staff development personnel.

A draft questionnaire was compiled and trialled on a small group of librarians in both the academic and state library sectors. Care was taken to avoid piloting the instrument with
people who would be targetted as respondents for the final version of the questionnaire. In addition to the librarians noted above, several academic colleagues and the researcher’s supervisors checked the instrument.

**Format**

The instrument was divided into 4 sections:

Section 1. *Demography* : which included information such as location, number of students (academic libraries only) and number of library staff.

Section 2. *General Training* : looked at budget allocations for, and attendance at, training; modes of training; and the anticipated or actual effect of award restructuring upon staff development policies and programs.

Section 3. *Skill Development* : looked at each library’s perception of the implementation of the structural efficiency principle (SEP), multi-skilling and competency standards.

Section 4. *General Issues* : looked at the general views held about award restructuring with regards to career pathways and opportunities, as well as the impact on staff development programs.

Each of these sections, except section 1, made allowances for different responses where a library had undertaken award restructuring, and for those who had not yet undertaken the change. A glossary of terms was also provided with the questionnaire to facilitate respondents’ understanding of the questions.
SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE

It was originally intended to send out the same survey twice with a year's interval, and then to compare the results and note any differences that had occurred over the twelve months. However, after studying the responses to the first questionnaire, it was felt that some questions were ambiguous and that the wording of others could have possibly biased some responses. While not changing the instrument in any major way, some questions were reworded, and additional answer boxes constructed, in order to clarify the responses. A copy of the questionnaire is given in Appendix 1 and the changes which were made are detailed in Appendix 2. The only other change made to the second questionnaire was that it was pre-coded. The first had been coded on its return.

Piloting the Questionnaire

Again, it was decided to trial the reworked questionnaire on a group of individuals who would not be final respondents. The aim of this pilot was to ensure that the changes made resulted in an instrument that was easier to understand and use. The pilot group consisted of students who were undertaking the Graduate Diploma of Library and Information Management course at the University of Melbourne, several librarians and other people, who, although not in the industry, provided valuable information on the design and structure of the questionnaire from another perspective. The comments and feedback received were very constructive and the information gained was used to refine the final questionnaire.
**Format**

The format was identical to the first instrument. The four sections covered demography (though this time additional information was sought on qualifications and staff development expertise of respondents and the number of library staff was broken down into number of librarians and number of library technicians), general training, skill development and general issues.

**Method**

An accompanying letter was sent to all respondents, together with a copy of last year’s survey and responses. It was requested that, where possible, the same respondent as last year complete the survey. This request was intended to ensure consistency of responses.

For both questionnaires, academic and state libraries were given three weeks to respond. Follow-up was done by telephone. Results of both surveys were analysed using the SPSS-X statistical software package for the social sciences.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

The data analysis was performed in three stages. First, frequency tables, prepared using SPSS-X for the two questionnaires, were compared to ascertain whether there had been any overall change in staff development practices. Second, SPSS-X was used to create a cross-tabulation of 1992 responses with those for 1993 according to the extent to which libraries had implemented award restructuring. The third stage, qualitative
analysis, involved a manual comparison of questionnaires to describe, interpret and explain uncoded questions, to illuminate important issues identified in the literature search, and to add another dimension to the quantitative data analysis. Another dimension to the qualitative analysis involved a phenomenological study of what was meant by the term “staff development”.

As it was felt that any changes in staff development and training practices would not necessarily occur immediately upon award restructuring, the libraries were divided into three groups. Those libraries which had already undergone restructuring at the time of the first survey were labelled the “Yes” group. This group numbered six as one of the seven which had been restructured in 1992 was unable to participate in the 1993 survey. The sixteen libraries where award restructuring had been implemented between the two surveys were labelled “Recent”. The remaining twenty libraries which at the time of the 1993 survey remained unrestructured became the “No” group. This group, it was felt, would act as a control in that it would indicate any underlying change in staff development and training practices.

The cross-tabulation of 1992 responses with 1993 responses for each restructuring status allowed only those libraries which had made a valid response to the relevant question in both years to be included. This presented a problem with questions, which in 1992 did not allow alternative valid responses (e.g., Questions 11, 25, 27) as only those libraries which had ticked the box in 1992 (an effective “yes”) were included in the cross-tabulation.
CASE STUDIES

In order to amplify the survey findings and to clarify responses to open ended questions, five libraries (three academic and two state) were chosen for visits. In-depth interviews were conducted with the person who had responded to the questionnaire. During the interview responses from both 1992 and 1993 were clarified and many of the issues raised were explored in greater detail. Also, the opportunity was taken to apply a phenomenological approach to determine what interviewees meant by the term “staff development” and whether they made a distinction between it and the term “training”.

PHENOMENOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Ethnographic studies describe a group’s socio-cultural activities and belief systems and on this basis construct a view of that group’s cultural and perceptual world.

Ethnography essentially involves descriptive data collection as the basis for interpretation; it represents a dynamic ‘picture’ of the way of life of some interacting social group. As a process, it is the science of cultural description. (Burns 1990, 223).

A subset of ethnographic research (the word “ethnography” literally means writing about people), phenomenographic research takes a second order perspective in that it investigates views or approaches to a phenomenon, rather than the nature of the phenomenon itself. Research conducted from the first order perspective attempts to make statements about reality; research from the second order perspective aims to find and systematise forms of thought in terms of which people interpret systems or aspects of reality. One of the key exponents of this approach, Ference Marton, defines

Rather than investigating the nature of a phenomenon, the way in which that aspect is seen, viewed or understood, is studied. These research problems are framed as “What do people think about a phenomenon?”. They seek to discover “the different ways in which people experience, interpret, apprehend, perceive or conceptualise various aspects of reality” (Marton 1981, 178). The results of research into these questions are written as statements about the way the world is viewed or experienced or understood.

The phenomenographic approach has become well established as a technique in educational research for exploring conceptions - the ways in which phenomena are experienced (L.Svensson ‘The Conceptualisation of Cases of Physical Motion’. *European Journal of Psychology of Education* 4 (4) p.529-545). The resulting descriptions of students’ conceptions have also proved to be valuable to teachers in designing learning situations and evaluating the outcomes.
**Phenomenographic research method**

The phenomenographic approach (Marton 1981, Saljo and Marton 1984, Saljo 1988) involves:

- attempting to elicit conceptions;
- collection of data through questioning in writing or in interviews;
- analysis of the data for different conceptions of the phenomenon; and
- testing the categories of description for reliability.

Questions asked of respondents are mostly open questions which are presented orally or in writing. These open questions are meant to make qualitatively different answers possible. The questions should encourage the respondents to reveal their thoughts about a subject rather than seek to reproduce a normative response.

**Pools of meaning**

Once the data is collected it is systematically organised in order to arrive at a small number of qualitatively different categories which describe conceptions, perceptions or approaches (Van Rossum and Schenk 1984, p.83; Saljo 1988, p.42). The process of analysis begins with creating ‘pools of meaning’ (Saljo and Marton 1984) which cut across the boundaries of any one individual’s discourse. The pools of meaning are created by reading and re-reading data whilst asking questions such as:
• “How does the respondent construe the phenomenon?”
• “What concepts does he or she use to explain it?”
• “What types of similarities with other phenomena are introduced?”

Similar responses are then assigned to groups which form the pools of meaning. Clearly in assigning data to a pool the context of the discourse/language is taken into account; the same words or phrases could take on different meanings in different contexts.

*Categories of description*

Once the pools of meaning are created, attention shifts to analysis of the notable differences between them. These differences form the basis of the categories of description. The categories of description are the intended outcomes of the research. Moving from pools of meaning to a hierarchy of similarities and differences is described as a “discovery procedure which can be justified in terms of results, but not in terms of method” (Saljo and Marton 1984, p.39). The categories are not ‘valued’ in any way. They are not assessed as right or wrong, better or worse. One may represent the authorised view. However, even the authorised view can change over time (Marton 1981; West 1986; Saljo 1988;).

Having established the categories of description they need to be tested for reliability. These categories of description are not mental models but represent the conceptions which have been discovered by the analyst of the phenomenon under investigation (Marton 1988b, p.43). They are “not identical with the conceptions...they are used to denote them” (Johansson, Marton and Svensson 1985, p.249). They describe the
relation between the person and the object (Marton 1988b). The descriptions are written in the form ‘x is seen as y’ (Lybeck and others 1988, p.101), and include sample quotations illustrating the category.

An important feature of the categories of description is the existence of what Saljo (1988, p.46) refers to as an internal logic between them. This relationship is also referred to as the structural aspect of the categories:

- each category is a potential part of a larger structure in which the category is related to other categories of description. It is a goal of phenomenography to discover the structural framework within which various categories of understanding exist (Marton 1988b, p.34).

Seeking a structural description of conceptions impinges on the analysis process. The researcher is attempting to discover the most distinctive feature which differentiates alternative ways of understanding the phenomenon. Consequently, where particular aspects are present in all responses, these do not become a focus of the research (Marton 1988a, p.182; 1986b, p.34). The focus is on the “essential, the most distinctive, the most crucial structural aspect of the relation between the individual and the phenomenon” (Marton 1988a, p.197). The categories of description all focus on the significant differences between them, and represent a ‘map’ against which learning can be “described as a change from one conception within this structure to a different one” (Saljo 1988, p.46).
Outcome space

Whereas the categories of meaning denote the ‘meaning’ or ‘referential’ aspect of the conceptions, the outcome space focusses on the structural aspects of the conceptions. The outcome space of the conceptions is a visual or diagrammatic representation of the categories of description which illustrates the relationships between them. It is indicative of the “patterns that the different conceptions make up together” (Johansson, Marton and Svensson 1985, p.246). The researcher relates the categories to each other logically and forms a structure from them. Thus the structure represented in the outcome space is between the categories, not between the data or the respondents. Although the ordering of conceptions does not necessarily reflect their proximity to the scientifically reflected conception (Johansson, Marton and Svensson 1985, p.246), it is nevertheless likely that conceptions will reflect previously held authorised conceptions about the phenomenon (Marton 1981, p.185).

Data gathering methods

Various information sources have been used by phenomenographers to explore conceptions. Although the interview technique has been the most common, it is not the only approach. Data may also be gathered in the form of written responses (Van Rossum and Schenk 1984, p.76; Marton, Carlsson and Halasz 1992). More crucial than the medium through which the responses are given, is the strategy devised to elicit the response. Questions, if used, must be sufficiently “open to allow the subjects to express their own way of structuring the aspects of reality they are relating to”
(Johansson, Marton and Svensson 1985, p.252). It is recommended that conceptual constraints be avoided to allow respondents to choose their own ways of interpreting the phenomenon in question.

**Approaches to data analysis**

The phenomenographic research movement has generated two distinctive approaches to the analysis of data. The first has been described by Marton and Saljo (1984), and Marton (1986b, 1988a). The second is described and advocated by Bowden (1990).

In the first approach, the recommended way of proceeding may be outlined as follows:

1. Data are read and re-read to gain a sense of patterns arising from the discourse.
2. Questions are asked to assist in gaining an understanding of respondents’ conceptions. For example, how does the respondent construe the phenomenon? What concepts does she or he use to explain it? What types of similarities with other phenomena are introduced?
3. Data relevant to the research inquiry are identified and marked. Data so identified are referred to as a ‘pool of meaning’.
4. Discourse selected for inclusion in the pool of meaning is then sorted on the basis of perceived similarity. Crucial at this early stage is the move away from identifying data with individuals.
5. As groups are identified, the contrasts between them are examined. ‘Categories of description’ are written, illustrated with examples for each group. The categories are written to show how each group differs from the others.
6. The categories of description are then verified by a co-judge.

The analysis procedure advocated by Bowden (1990 p.4-9) differs in several respects from that described by Saljo and Marton.

1. The early phase of selecting relevant utterances from interview transcripts or other data is omitted.

2. The focus is on whole transcripts rather than on quotes which have been extracted from the data gathered.

3. In bringing together data into groups in order to discover conceptions, it is whole transcripts which are assigned to groups.

4. The analysis is carried out by a team, members of which argue for or against the inclusion of data (whole transcripts) in a particular category. Disagreements lead to redistribution of transcripts or rewriting of categories. This group aspect is not essential to Saljo and Marton’s technique in which reliability of results is verified by a co-judge towards the end of the process.

A major implication of these differences is that Bowden’s way of proceeding does not allow for multiple conceptions being contained within the writing or interview transcript of a single respondent. Saljo (1988, p.42) clearly disassociates conceptions from being a description of an individual:

Conceptions of reality are not seen as residing within individuals. In other words people do not have specific conceptions of a phenomenon in the world around them, in the sense that behavioural scientists have had the tendency to ascribe intellectual capacity or developmental stages to individuals. People may and do have a tendency to use particular conceptions of reality in a number of settings or in relation to a
number of problems, but they cannot always be assumed to adopt that particular perspective of reality.

The idea of a whole transcript representing a single conception is to infer that the conception is linked to or identifiable with an individual, if only at a particular point in time. Marton's view is that conceptions do not reside within individuals and the analysis procedures he adopts cease to associate data with individuals once the initial identification of relevant material has been completed.

**Validity and reliability**

Qualitative research poses difficulties in relation to considerations of reliability and validity. The term ‘validity’ in the quantitative research paradigm is taken to refer to the replicability of the research. In this sense, phenomenographic enquiry cannot be validated as it involves “non-algorithmic discovery procedures”; a different researcher may identify a different set of categories of description (Saljo 1988, p.45).

In phenomenographic research the validity of categories is not considered to be dependent upon other researchers being able to discover the same categories from the same data. The categories are the construction of the researcher and there is always a possibility that another researcher would have arrived at another categorisation. In phenomenology, the validity of the categories of description can be established in the following ways:
• the ability to establish the internal logic of the categories
• (the ability to establish an outcome space depicting logical relationships between the
categories is a major source of verification [Saljo 1988, p.46]);
• demonstrable derivation from the data
• (that is, the categories must usefully describe the points of view underlying
participants’ responses about the phenomenon and be sufficient to describe the
data);
• correlation with ‘authorised ’ conceptions (comparison with other studies is seen as
a possible technique for testing the applicability of the categories; this could include
‘authorised’ conceptions of the phenomenon as advocated in the literature);
• acceptance of the categories of description by participants in the study.

Although another researcher may not identify the same variations in meaning, the
categories of description can be shown to be ‘reliable’. Reliability is achieved through
establishing that a co-judge is able to perceive the same distinctions as have been found
by the researcher (Saljo 1988). Saljo (1988, p.45) outlines a recommended technique
for determining whether or not the established categories are valid and reliable. This
involves writing ‘judgement instructions’ which describe the differences between the
categories. The instructions should also include examples of statements belonging to the
various categories. These instructions should be used by someone other than the
researcher to classify the same data with a reliability rate of at least 80%. The use of a
co-judge checks the ‘communicability’ of the categories, and validates the researcher’s
interpretation of the data.
The aim of phenomenographic research is to discover and describe, in logically related
categories of description, conceptions of the phenomenon in question.
Phenomenographers are not concerned with the sources of the variations they discover
(Saljo 1988, p.37). Nor are they concerned with classifying people, comparing groups,
explaining or predicting (Marton 1981, p.180). There is no attempt to explain human
behaviour or discover the psychological characteristics of individuals (Van Rossum and
Schenk 1984, p.74). This is essentially because the use of particular conceptions is
likely to be dependent upon contextual variables. Once the conceptions have been
identified, however, it may then be possible to explore links between specific
conceptions and behaviour patterns. An example of this might be attempting to improve
teaching and learning by focussing on changing students’ conceptions (Johansson and
others 1985; Bowden 1986b; Beaty 1987; Pramling 1988; Ramsden 1988a and 1992).

APPLICATIONS OF PHENOMENOGRAPHIC METHODOLOGY

Phenomenographic methodology has been used in the field of education to facilitate
teaching and learning about a phenomenon. It was used in the case studies of this
research to ascertain what respondents meant by the term “staff development” and
whether they made any distinction between this term and the term “training”.

The libraries chosen were all outside Victoria in order to build on the researcher’s first-
hand knowledge of the use of the term by home-state academic and state library staff
development librarians. For ease of access three academic libraries in the ACT were
chosen. These libraries were representative of the small, medium and large libraries as
categorised in the survey findings. The state libraries chosen were the State Library of Tasmania and the ACT Library Service. Although among the smaller state libraries, the State Library of Tasmania has an unusual administrative structure in that it is responsible for delivering public library service on a regionalised basis throughout the state (in most other states, local government is primarily responsible for delivering public library services with varying degrees of state government support). Yet, like other state libraries, its staff are subject to state awards and industrial requirements and reforms. The ACT Library Service, too, is directly responsible for delivery of public library services, but its staff are subject to federal awards and conditions. Although there are only five libraries, responsibility for staff development at the State Library of Tasmania and the ACT Library Service is shared by two people, thus there are seven respondents in all.
CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The methodology outlined in the previous chapter described the genesis of this research, the impact of the literature review on forming the four specific research questions, and the conceptual framework which was used to categorise the components of the research and to guide data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 also described the research design and its rationale, the methodological approach, means of data collection and strategies for data analysis. This chapter explains the structure of the two questionnaires and then discusses the responses to them. The component categories of the research are structured into the questionnaires.

In 1992, there were 45 respondents. This fell to 42 in 1993. In two cases this was due to amalgamations of institutions in the higher education sector. The remaining case was a state library which, due to pressures of restructuring, declined to participate. The survey findings are followed by a phenomenological analysis of the term, “staff development” drawn from interviews with seven people. The chapter concludes with the researcher’s observations based on her knowledge of the topic, and of practice in both sectors.
**FINDINGS**

The survey results are presented in the same order as the questions on the questionnaire. Results are then summarised according to the key concepts of the National Training Reform Agenda. The outcome of the phenomenological study of the term, “staff development” is presented, and the chapter concludes with general observations and questions posed by the findings.

**SECTION 1 - Demography**

Although not asked in the first questionnaire, in the second questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate the position they held in their library and any qualifications and/or experience in staff development. This indicated the level, qualifications and experience of the people responsible for staff development. Therefore, the comparison between the years was limited to the name of the respondent only. There were few changes in the person answering the questionnaires (thirty-two out of forty-two questionnaires returned were answered by the same person as last year). This reduced variations in results due to differing personal interpretations of the questions.

The titles of the positions varied greatly. Few respondents nominated “staff development” as a component of the title. Most of the respondents held senior positions in their libraries, such as University, Chief or Deputy Librarian, Director of Management Services, Staffing and Administration Librarian, or other senior management position with responsibility for human resources management, including staff development and training.
The experience, or time associated, with staff development ranged from eighteen months to twenty-six years experience as a library manager. Formal qualifications in the fields of business and librarianship were noted (eleven graduates listed one or more degrees) but not all respondents would have included this information as the question was specific to staff development qualifications. There were only eight respondents with no comments or qualifications in this area. In 1993, thirty six percent of the respondents had formal qualifications and fifty three percent had practical experience.

Twenty-three of the forty-two respondents had experience in or were responsible for organising and conducting staff development programs. As nearly all respondents hold either senior management positions, or are responsible for staff development and training in their libraries, it may be assumed that their responses reflect institutional policies and experiences.

**SECTION 2 - General Training**

**Staff Development Policies**

There was a net increase of one in the number of libraries having a written staff development policy (1992 - 26 out of 45; 1993 - 27 out of 42). No significant difference was noted according to restructuring status. However, when the responses were analysed according to the qualifications and experience of the person responsible for staff development, there was a greater incidence of people with formal human resources or related qualifications having implemented a staff development policy. See Table 5.1 below:
Table 5.1: Impact of qualifications of staff development manager on existence of staff development policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Involvement of Staff in Staff Development and Training Activities

Questions 7 to 10 required respondents to estimate the proportions of their training budgets allocated to the training of librarians and qualified library technicians, and the percentage of activities attended by each of these groups. Allowable responses were “0-25%”, “26%-50%”, “51%-75%” or “over 76%”. Only thirty-one of the libraries were able to respond to these questions in both surveys as many did not employ such a breakdown, sometimes because the training budget was managed by the parent body. No significant change from 1992 could be discerned and there was no difference according to restructuring status. Of the thirty-one respondents, most reported no change. Several reported reductions in budget allocations and reduced training activity attendance for library technicians (notably two libraries reported reductions in percentage of training activities attended by library technicians from “over 76%” to “0-25%”, and one from “51%-75%” to “0-25%”). It was considered, however, that changing the term “library technician” to “qualified library technician” in the 1993
questionnaire may have affected these figures. For each of the questions relating to librarians, six libraries reported changes to their access to budget for training, with three more libraries moving into the 51-75% category in 1993. Two of these, however, had moved back from the over 76% category. Generally expenditure given for librarians was significantly higher than those for library technicians but, as most libraries employed considerably more librarians than technicians, no conclusion can be reached about per capita support for these two classifications.

Questions 9 and 10, which asked about percentages of training activities attended by librarians and qualified library technicians, seemed to imply that activities were aimed at either qualified library technicians or librarians, but not both. It is felt that this question was open to several interpretations, e.g., percentage of total person-hours in staff development and training or numbers of activities open to staff and that this also limits the interpretation of these results.

Question 11 asked about the availability of training to part-time and casual staff members. The question was changed for 1993 to provide information on part-time and casual librarians and qualified library technicians, and to distinguish “no” from “no response” or “not applicable”. This, however, reduced the comparability of the responses by excluding staff members in other classifications.

In 1992, 42 of the original 45 libraries indicated that training was accessible to part-time staff, and all the 1993 respondents who employed part-time librarians and qualified library technicians allowed them access to training. The situation was less clear for casual staff.
Table 5.2: Access to training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>42 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Access to training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time Library Technicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1992, 27 of the 45 libraries indicated that training was available to casual staff. Of the remaining 18, many indicated that they did not employ casualties. In 1993, 19 libraries indicated that training was available to casual librarians whereas 13 indicated that it was not. The numbers for qualified library technicians were 15 and 10 respectively. From these figures it is apparent that in both 1992 and 1993, about 60% of libraries made training accessible to their casual staff. No relationship can be imputed with restructuring...
status, due to the changes made both to the question and to the allowable responses (see Methodology above and Appendix 2).

*Modes of Training Delivery*

In 1993, as in 1992, almost all respondents used a combination of on-the-job, internal and external modes of training. On-the-job training was found to be, by far, the most common mode of delivery in 1992 (14 out of 26 valid responses, or 54%), whereas, in 1993, it was identified as most common mode for qualified library technicians by 13 out of 31 libraries (42%) and for librarians by only 11 out of 34 (32%). The most frequently reported “most common mode” for librarians was “external to the library” (14 out of 34, or 41%).

*Table 5.4: Most common mode of delivery*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Library Technicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-Job</td>
<td>14 (53.8%)</td>
<td>13 (41.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-house</td>
<td>4 (15.4%)</td>
<td>8 (25.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>8 (30.8%)</td>
<td>10 (32.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of respondents comments follow:
I can see that award restructuring may increase the need for more on the job training and better quality training in some cases. For instance, if skills or competencies are clearly identified for each level as well as the training required for each skill level, then evaluation to training outcomes will need to be more stringent. If staff are to access higher levels through skill acquisition rather than completion of formal qualifications, then assessment of training programs will be essential.

I don’t see the budget allocation or attendance necessarily changing dramatically but if in-house CBT courses are recognised for credit towards advancement to a higher level, the structure of courses, themselves and the materials, assessment, recording outcomes, etc will be more formalised than at present. The level of external training will probably be maintained because of continuing changes in technology.

We expect more in-house training, perhaps using a competency-based model.

The surveys also asked whether training was undertaken in work time, in staff members own time or both. The 1993 survey showed a slight move away from work time towards the “both” category, but the movement is too small to be conclusive.

At first glance, the data suggest a move away from on-the-job training toward structured sessions presented either internally or externally. Of the individual libraries, which answered in both years, 7 changed their response from “on-the-job” to “internal” or “external”, while 14 responded as previously. Only one library moved from “internal” or “external” to “on-the-job”. However, the increase in numbers of valid respondents in 1993, (which may be related to changes to question 13) and the exclusion in 1993 of staff without formal library qualifications, (who might have been expected to receive proportionally more on-the-job training) make any such conclusion risky. This apparent move toward formal training sessions was equally evident in the unrestructured libraries
as those, which had restructured, so even if a change could be discerned, it could not be
said to be related to the library’s award restructuring status. It is also emphasised that
the question was not designed to provide information on the proportions of training
presented by each mode, seeking only to identify the single most common mode.

Question 14 asked whether training took place in work time, staff time or both. Of the
libraries which answered this question in both years, five changed from “work time” to
“both”, three changed from “both” to “work time” and 33 reported no change. Again
there was no difference in response according to restructuring status. Thus no evidence
has been found to suggest that award restructuring has led to changes in the modes of
delivery or in staff time committed to training.

Perceived Present and Future Effects of Award Restructuring on Staff
Development and Training

Questions 16 to 19 asked respondents how they felt award restructuring had affected,
or would affect, the aspects of staff development and training identified in the earlier
questions.

In 1992, only two of the seven libraries which had implemented award restructuring, felt
that it had already affected their staff development and training programs. In 1993, this
increased only to three out of 22. Many of the recently restructured libraries commented
that it was too early for effects to be felt but that they were expected in the future. Of
the four libraries in the “Yes” group (i.e. award restructuring implemented by 1992)
which responded in both years, responses were evenly divided and identical for both years.

On the future effects of award restructuring on staff development and training, 24 out of the 36 libraries who responded in 1993 felt there would be changes, compared with 20 out of 35 in 1992. Of the six libraries which in 1992 had already undergone restructuring, four (the same as in 1992) had either experienced or expected to experience change as a result of restructuring.

Of the recently restructured libraries, three, who formerly expected no change, now expected change, while in the group yet to undergo restructuring, this number was four. In this latter group, one library, which had previously expected changes now expected none. From the 1993 responses, however, it is apparent that there is greater awareness among libraries of the potential effects of award restructuring on their staff development and training programs than a year ago.

*Table 5.5: Expectation of future change to staff development & training from award restructuring*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 24 libraries who expected future change, almost all predicted increases in several areas. The specific areas where future increases were most often expected were: the
amount and quality of on-the-job and in-house training, the attendance of full- and part-time qualified library technicians and librarians at training, the budget allocations for training for full-time qualified library technicians and the amount of training in staff’s own time.

Of particular interest were the amounts of on-the-job and in-house training, increases being expected by 19 (79%) and 18 respondents (75%) respectively. Increases in the quality of these two modes of delivery were expected by 16 (67%). In contrast, for external training, only 8 (33%) expected an increase in the amount and 10 (42%) in the quality, with decreases in both these areas being expected by one library.

10 respondents (42%) expected an increase in the amount of training in staff’s own time while 9 (38%) foresaw an increase in training in work time. The areas where change was least expected were in budget allocation and training attendance for casual staff, where 87% of respondents expected no change.

These responses were very similar to those reported for 1992. Numbers of libraries predicting an increase in the amount of training were larger for all modes than in 1992, as were numbers predicting an increase in training in staff’s own time. Once again there were no significant differences according to restructuring status.
SECTION 3 - Skill Development

Qualifications vs Experience

Question 20 attempted to discover whether formal qualifications or experience were emphasised in current library awards. The 1992 survey showed that restructured awards emphasised experience rather than formal qualifications (2 out of 7) unlike unrestructured awards (17 out of 36). Unfortunately the addition to the 1993 survey of the option “both”, which was intended to clarify the question, seems to have prevented the respondents from identifying the major focus of their awards. This option was selected by 26 libraries and, combined with “neither”, accounted for 31 of the 42 respondents. This left only 10 libraries selecting “formal qualifications rather than experience” six of whom were in the unrestructured group. For the recently restructured group, who might be expected to have new awards, 11 of the 15 now answered “both”, two reported no change from 1992, and of the remaining two, both of which answered “neither” in 1992, one now answered “formal qualifications” and one “experience”.

From these data, no conclusions can be drawn about any change in emphasis of newly restructured awards, except that, as in 1992, unrestructured awards were more likely to emphasise formal qualifications. This is one clear example of the national training reform agenda having had an effect. Many restructured awards require libraries to employ staff who either have formal qualifications and/or relevant experience, thus recognising learning other than that implied by acquisition of a formal award.

As in 1992, almost all libraries surveyed replied that their staff development policies and programs encouraged, and actively supported, staff in gaining qualifications necessary
for career progression and that they allowed retraining of staff to meet changes in skills required under award restructuring. However, the extent to which retraining is supported may have decreased slightly with 17 libraries answering “to a large extent”, compared with 21 in 1992, and 20 answering “to some extent” (18 in 1992). Eight respondents, spread across all restructured groups, reported a reduction in the extent of their support for retraining, while four recently restructured libraries (two of whom answered “not at all” in 1992) reported an increase in this extent. The only respondent, who still answered “not at all”, remained unrestructured.

Again these data need to be interpreted cautiously due to the reliance on individual interpretation of the responses “to some extent” and “to a large extent”. It is hoped that libraries with restructured awards would have put in place the training mechanisms necessary for that implementation, but it is possible that a changed response might indicate a revised view of an existing policy in the light of experience of award restructuring, rather than a change in that policy.

SEP as a Catalyst for Change

As in 1992, the majority of libraries saw the SEP as facilitating change in the way staff development and training was conceived (26), planned (30) and implemented (25). Twenty-four respondents selected all three. Three-quarters of the restructured libraries saw SEP as facilitating change in these areas, compared with slightly more than half of the twenty libraries where award restructuring had not yet been implemented (conceived - 10, planned - 14, implemented - 11). Typical comments included:
As skills are defined for each level, staff development may become more directed towards the acquisition of specific, rather than general skills.

Key features of SEP which will affect staff development programs are the emphases on flexibility and multi-skilling.

Need to ensure multiskilling and career development opportunities are provided

We have encouraged all staff to develop skills related to their ability but have been constrained by their level of formal qualifications as to position and salary levels. If this changes the staff development program will change as more staff see advantages in participating.

The changes will provide more incentives for staff to participate in staff development programs.

Information from SEP process has been very useful in planning staff development.

I expect to see a shift towards more job focussed staff development with more emphasis on outcomes.

Staff training/development should become an integral part of the multi-skilling process within the awards.

SEP will broaden the concept of staff development, encouraging (in this library) skills transfer across sections, introduction of self-managing workgroups (together with ITS).

Multi-skilling will require more and more continuous staff development.

Not all comments were positive, however. For example,

I can see no evidence of SEP even being considered in the present restructuring negotiations.
Our current career paths are quite rigidly controlled (eg. there has to be a vacancy before staff members can be promoted). This leaves little incentive for staff to actively seek retraining, etc.

Staff development has always been allocated according to requirements of the position for technical skills eg ABN, Dialog; for development of management/supervisory skills are required; specialised skills on request and conference attendance as relevant eg Cataloguers to the Cataloguing Conference. I can not see this changing except to become more formalised.

Sixteen libraries added comments, including that SEP had led to an increase in the organisation’s commitment to staff development and training, that it made training better co-ordinated, better documented and more directed toward the acquisition of specific skills, and that information from the SEP process had assisted in planning staff development programs. Two recently restructured libraries stated that the process had not yet addressed training. One expected that training would be “one of the negotiating points” in enterprise bargaining, a response which suggests the organisation sees training as being of benefit mainly to its employees, rather than a benefit to achievement of its goals. Of the unrestructured libraries, two felt that SEP would have little effect, as multiskilling and staff development were already practised in the library, while one doubted that SEP would be sufficient to improve a negative institutional attitude toward staff development.

I don’t believe an externally imposed system can radically alter institutional philosophy.
The institutional philosophy of the organisation needs to be changed to facilitate staff development. This may be affected by external factors, but so far there is little evidence of change.

**Competency Standards**

Most respondents saw the proposed development of Australia-wide library industry competency standards as having an effect on staff development (29 in 1992 rising to 32 in 1993). An increased number of respondents felt that the competencies, then being developed by Arts Training Australia (now CREATE), would provide clearer guidelines for future training strategies. Clarifying levels of achievement would result in more focussed staff development and training programs which would give priority to the provision of training in the competencies. Some of the respondents’ comments included:

- Clearer guidelines on skills/competencies needed to be developed at each level. The competencies currently being developed by Arts Training Australia will provide a much clearer focus for future training strategies.

- Inevitable, staff development will need to focus on the provision of training in the competencies as a priority.

- [The competencies will give rise to] better training, better mobility between organisations.

- Once the competency standards are set, gearing in-house expectations and standards will lead to wider choice in off-site developmental opportunities. (This could also apply to some aspects of on-the-job training).

- More demand for training, especially where related to more explicit career paths.
The Library will need to assess the effect of national competency standards on the organisation. If new organisational strategies are required, the staff development programme would need to accommodate these.

Useful for comparative purpose and to provide benchmarks for training needs and design of programs.

Useful to examine our own job design.

The program will move (& is already starting to do so) towards competency-based training. We will also be influenced by the competency debate in the academic arena. It will affect how we describe jobs, skills, use these statements in recruiting and construct our training records and set up training objectives and assessments, etc.

Keeps us in individual libraries from re-inventing the wheel.

Hopefully, [the use of competency standards] will eliminate vague terms & clarity levels of achievement.

Staff development will be geared to ensure any competency standards are met.

[The use of competency standards will lead to] more focussed and structured staff development.

Will make career paths clearer when competencies are identified for levels of work.

Eventually, setting of competency standards will assist the development of consistent frameworks for training of staff development.

To a certain degree these competency standards [already] exist for librarians and library technicians. It is the non-professionals/para-professional area where they will have most effect eg for admin & clerical staff in public libraries. This category of staff will have standards to attain. This will undoubtedly have an effect on staff development.
Will allow staff development to be more focused and more productive.

I believe the proposed competency standards and the introduction of Performance Planning and Review will work together.

However, the number of respondents with reservations about the national competencies increased (from four in 1992 to 12 in 1993). Many of these reservations concerned the process of identifying and defining competency standards, with some feeling the standards would be too vague, general or out of date, and others that they would be too restrictive.

As with most things, it will be either good or bad. At present there are two worrying trends: 1) The standards will be so general they won’t really benefit real library positions; 2) The ‘group’ developing them is heavily weighted towards museums and art galleries with minimal library input.

Should such competency standards be accepted by library community, they would provide us with an externally driven agenda to which we would have to respond.

Despite having attended information sessions and read available information on this I am largely unclear on the purpose and potential impact of competency standards, particularly in relation to the quite clear descriptors in the new award.

Likely to be spending more time conforming to the competency standards which will be out of date by the time they are agreed & so leaving less time for creative developments to meet the changing needs of libraries.

I believe the competency standards will be diluted to the extent they will be useless.

The interpretation, implementation and impact of these standards were also areas of concern.
Will provide a framework for structuring staff development programmes, assuming the concept does not die under its own weight.

Responsibility for maintenance of standards will be with the employer as well as individual.

Will depend on how well we rate against the competency standards. Our staff development program is aimed at excellence in performance not just competency.

Depends on the standards. My expectation is that staff will meet the competency standards - as staff development program is aimed at achieving excellence.

In general, staff development will need to adapt to the wider variety of formal library and information training which will emerge after the establishment of national competency standards.

Too early to tell. I suspect they could have a depressing effect, given the manner of their compilation.

The question is whether we can deliver, particularly with limited funds directed to general staff development in the University sector.

Skills/competencies will be defined more rigorously. Some of us are cynical in our belief that such definitions will still be open to interpretation and assessment difficulties. If the theory works, however, we can expect less guess work in staff selection and appraisal.

There may be some initial impact in the training staff to meet new requirements however libraries require a high level of competency in most areas which to date has been maintained through available training courses, etc.

In principle, should have positive effects, but I have some reservations at this stage, almost the process of identifying and defining the competencies.
This was one aspect of the survey where geographic location of the library had some bearing, although type of library did not. (See Table 5.6 and Table 5.7).

**Table 5.6: Effect of competency standards on staff development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ACADEMIC LIBRARY</th>
<th>STATE LIBRARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.7: Effect of competency standards on staff development by state of respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a geographic breakdown, institutions in Queensland and South Australia were the most divided in their responses, whilst the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory, Tasmania and Western Australia all believed that the standards would have an impact.
There was no change in the total number of libraries which had undertaken a skills audit (9). Several libraries, which reported them as in process in 1992, did not mention them in 1993, leading to speculation the process may have been abandoned.

**Multi-Skilling and Productivity**

Question 27 suggested a number of beneficial effects which might be attributed to the practice of multi-skilling as presented in the SEP. As in 1992, most libraries saw multi-skilling as having numerous benefits. The number of respondents in 1993 recognising each benefit are presented below.

**Table 5.8: The number of respondents in 1993 recognising each benefit.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allow employers and employees greater capacity to adapt to the pressures of new technology</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase employee satisfaction through a greater variety of tasks</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessen demarcation between tasks</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a positive effect on career prospects</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase staff capacity for innovation</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the scope of individual initiative through participation in goal setting</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a positive impact on job security</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only job security was seen by several respondents (9) as being adversely affected by multi-skilling whilst, as in 1992, career prospects were seen, by most respondents, to benefit. On the issue of job security, one respondent commented:

> The effect of multi-skilling can also be to unsettle staff and decrease satisfaction if they feel they do not ‘own’ a particular job. Some staff prefer to develop expertise in a particular area rather than multi-skill with no particular expertise.
As in 1992, the areas, where multi-skilling was encouraged in the greatest number of libraries (38 and 39 respectively) were horizontal and technical. (Technical multi-skilling is defined as the varying of work to increase skills; horizontal multi-skilling is defined as extending the range of a staff member’s skills across functionally and/or organisationally distinct areas at the same classification level). The number of libraries where functional multi-skilling was encouraged increased from 32 to 35, while the biggest change was in vertical multi-skilling, which increased from 22 to 29. Most libraries (38 out of 42) answered that multi-skilling was beneficial to productivity, although many comments indicated that they were hopeful, rather than confident of improvement, or that they felt any improvement would be marginal.

There are no longer delays caused by a particular officer being away - others can take over; peaks and trough in workload can be dealt with by adjusting staff numbers in each area of need.

I have yet to be convinced of a significant productivity increase however, job satisfaction certainly improves.

Multi-skilling is effective if the staff member wants to learn new skills and has sufficient time and opportunity to achieve a satisfactory skill level in all tasks. The concept of excellence in performance is vital to organisational efficiency.

Wider range of skills and more mobile and motivated staff leads to more efficient work. (provided that training is good).

Provided that training is effective, a wider range of skills and a more mobile and motivated staff leads to more efficient work.

Hopefully staff can be deployed flexibly. Multi-skilled staff can make a greater direct and indirect contribution to library services.
[Multi-skilling will] improve job satisfaction and staff flexibility.

Overall, it improves job satisfaction and gives flexibility to managers. However it does create a pressure for promotion/higher financial rewards, which are difficult to satisfy in a static or declining employment environment.

Multi skilling will, in the future enable staff to develop wider bands of skills across functional areas of responsibility.

Introduces variety and sense of achievement in accruing and utilising additional skills.

In a small library like ours staff work together more co-operatively and can provide a greater level of back-up for each other.

As multi-skilling is mainly in the Technical and Collection Services areas the variations in demand can be addressed by a number of people eg acquisitions staff assisting in cataloguing towards the end of the financial year when acquisitions work diminished thus assisting in increasing the numbers of books on the shelves.

More flexible workforce, better client service.

Overall, there is potential for a flexible, more productive workforce.

I believe multi-skilling contributes to the quality of working life and as such this will impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire organisation.

Better knowledge of processes creates the shared motivation which leads to better performance and improved procedures.

Not all respondents described multi-skilling in this positive way. Some were far more cautious:
Some good lost and much angst often accompanies change. If done properly good for individuals in the long term.

Repetitive tasks quickly become ‘automatic’ & productivity often drops.

Even multi skilling has its down sides. More training needed, more rostering, division of tasks, difficulties in managing and quality control. Allocation of specialist roles and development of expertise presents difficulties. Also, suspect you win morale and lose on efficiency.

There is a certain amount of resistance to change, particularly from long standing employees.

Taken to extremes it can reduce the level of professional excellence. Otherwise can increase management flexibility & broaden staff experience.

Multi-skilling must not mean a reduction in the quality of work performed. A standard of excellence, although not necessarily specialised, must be maintained.

**SECTION 4 - General Issues**

**Productivity**

The concept of increased productivity was interpreted, as in 1992, by the overwhelming majority of libraries (37) as being both quantitative and qualitative. Both of the libraries, which interpreted the term quantitatively, were unrestructured and two of the three whose interpretation was qualitative, were unrestructured, the third having only recently implemented award restructuring. This respondent commented:
Very difficult to measure. Although productivity is decreased by need for more training eventually there is observable increase in flexibility and satisfaction which hopefully has a positive effect on productivity.

A comment from one of the other two was:

Its key impact will be morale improvement. I would doubt if productivity would increase. The more narrowly defined the tasks, the greater the efficiency though not necessarily worker satisfaction.

The number of respondents who felt that this conception of productivity had affected their staff development approach rose slightly from the 1992 figures (from 14 to 16), while the number who indicated no effect rose from 5 to 8. The number who responded that it had ‘not yet’ had an effect fell from 26 to 18. Thus, it would appear that staff development programs are gradually starting to reflect current interpretations of productivity.

**Effects of Award Restructuring and Enterprise Bargaining on Staff**

Only two 1993 respondents believed that award restructuring was disadvantageous overall to librarians and qualified library technicians, compared with six in 1992. The number, who felt they were neither advantaged or disadvantaged, rose from five to ten, while 25 (26 in 1992) felt that staff overall were advantaged. These advantages included salary increases, improved career progression, and increased flexibility (e.g., in working hours). Among the libraries which had been restructured, opinion was evenly divided on whether career path opportunities for librarians and qualified library technicians had been improved under the new award. Libraries, which had not undergone restructuring,
were more likely to see the process as improving career paths for library technicians by
giving them access to higher levels, but they, too, were evenly divided on career paths
for librarians. For example,

It will mean more money but fewer staff - so I do not know whom this will benefit.

Cannot see its introduction being beneficial in the short term.

No. I think it would be very threatening & staff would need considerable training
before undertaking it.

Although there were few changes from the 1992 results, respondents did seem more
optimistic about career opportunities for librarians than a year ago. Comments included,
for example:

Will enable high performers to be acknowledged.

Positive sense of belonging and involvement with relevant changes, e.g., increased
flexibility over working conditions and leave to suit family situations.

Respondents were divided over whether enterprise bargaining would be generally
beneficial to librarians and library technicians, with 15 replying “yes”, 14 “no” and 13
either stating that they did not know or giving no response. However, many of those
who answered “yes” or “no” added that they were unsure. The main benefit foreseen for
staff in enterprise bargaining was that they could achieve more flexibility in terms of
working hours and modes, although with the possible loss of penalty rates. Several
respondents felt that the interests of staff would be subordinated to more powerful
interests, and to the organisation’s need to save money, while others felt that more
articulate, or better performing staff, would gain, whilst others would be disadvantaged.

Comments which reflect this range of views follow:

Do not believe enterprise bargaining will be fruitful for staff in a feminized service profession.

It has the potential to be beneficial depending on the ‘bargain’ which is struck between the employers and the union.

They [library staff] will be swamped by the concerns of larger groups in the institutions. Even their union has less muscle.

Enterprise bargaining has been in effect since 1989. The overall effect for libraries is that those who could argue well have done better in the salary area than others, this has led to inequalities of salaries for staff with similar responsibilities. Library Technicians have been inclined to accept what is on offer rather than negotiate anything more complex.

[Enterprise bargaining would be beneficial] in terms of flexibility of hours and modes of working.

It will allow the best performers to be properly rewarded.

I do not believe this institution will approach enterprise bargaining with any other motive than to save money.

Library staff could do relatively well but only if we remain well organised & vocal.

**Strategic Planning and Staff Development**

Most libraries surveyed had a strategic, business or corporate plan (34 out of 42) and two libraries were in the process of implementing a plan. Four libraries stated that there
was no strategic plan and two libraries made no comments. Of these last six libraries, all were academic and five of the six had no award restructuring.

There is a relationship between libraries’ strategic plans and staff development programs in that their strategic plans included direct references to staff development. There were only three exceptions. One of these libraries was bound by the overall university policy. For another, there was very little direct relationship and staff development was not included in the plan. The other exception had future plans to include staff development. Many respondents also reinforced the links between their strategic plans and their staff development goals in their open-ended comments. For example:

Staff development is specifically mentioned in the Strategic Plan of the Library in terms of the effective management of human resources to provide the library services.

Staff development activities are being arranged to enable staff to achieve objectives set out in Business/Corporate Plan.

Staff development is integral to the strategic planning process. The need to develop staff who are able to achieve the Library’s strategic goals has long been recognised.

The two are integrated. We mesh the individuals’ interests, skills, knowledge with the Library’s plans and policies and deploy staff based on the staff development programme.

Human resource development is part of the strategic plan to provide effective services to clients.

Staff development is a major objective in the Library’s strategic plan, and strategies are developed accordingly.
[The] strategic plan contains specific goals and strategies related to effective & efficient use of human resources, including training and development. Annual action plans with training implications will be appropriately resourced.

Staff development program has two elements - meeting the goals of the individual and of the institution. The institutional goals are set as a result of the strategic planning process.

Strategic planning (draft just completed) will be responsible for reviewing & possibly reorienting much of the SD program. The plan has greatly emphasised the need for SD.

Annual strategic planning exercise engenders section plans/goals/objectives which create staff development needs, which result in planned staff development proposals for all staff.

It is a component of the Library’s Strategic Plan. Emphasis now also in quality assurance programmes in both the Strategic Plan and the Staff Development Plan.

Many of the staff training activities and developmental programs resulted from the Library’s first Strategic Planning exercise.

Strategic planning identifies the direction - staff development prepares the staff to move in the direction identified - this usually involves skilling for technological & industrially driven changes.

Strategic planning helps plan staff development, staff development occurs during strategic planning!

Over the last 2 yrs more closely linked Staff Development & training is now integrated to the Strat. Plan
Each strategy that the division undertakes is analysed in terms of implications for staff development. This, plus environmental analysis & training needs analysis is used as the basis for the training & development plan.

Staff development is an essential mechanism for the achievement of the Library’s goals.

Some libraries identified specific strategic planning goals and objectives and quoted directly from their strategic plans:

The State Library Strategic Plan strategy ‘enable staff to develop skills and knowledge to meet personal and organisational needs’ translates into a core Key Result Area for all Divisions, with a performance measure of ‘a highly productive organisation which maximises benefits to all stakeholders. This is assessed in various ways: productivity improvements by Branch reported on annually; letters of appreciation and complaints (annual reporting); qualitative interviews with clients. A personal Development Program has been implemented to match individual work plans and development needs with Branch Action Plans.

Library Strategic Plan 1992-1995 states: 'Staff will have a high level of competency & application enhanced & reviewed through a staff development program’ (objective/outcome) & ‘Ensure that staff development is accorded sufficiently high priority to ensure that staff can learn, adapt, update or refresh the knowledge they require to successfully carry out their current duties & can develop their potential’ (strategy).

These libraries viewed strategic planning as being of mutual benefit to both the organisation and staff. The organisations used strategic planning for the effective management of human resources, to identify the skills required to meet the library’s objectives and provide effective services to clients. Their staff could learn, adapt, update
or refresh the knowledge and skills they required to carry out current and planned roles and simultaneously develop their potential. The library’s restructuring status had little impact on the relationship between strategic planning and staff development, however, most of the libraries, which have been slow in implementing strategic planning, have yet to undertake award restructuring.

Other Important Issues for the Design and Delivery of Staff Development Programs

Table 5.9 demonstrates the range of influences identified by respondents to Question 42 (Question 41 in 1992) on other issues for the design and delivery of staff development programs. The responses have been grouped under headings such as financial resources, staff, evaluation etc. Numbers of respondents citing elements in each group are indicated for each year.

Table 5.9: Other issues identified by respondents for the design and delivery of staff development programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial resources (Includes impact of TGA)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amalgamations</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth in staff training and development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to staff training and development programs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most important issues identified by the respondents for the design and delivery of staff development were the financial and human resource management policies of each institution. Each issue in the above table is discussed briefly below.

**Financial Resources**

Most libraries were restricted by budget and funding constraints. Financial resources were the dominant issue identified by respondents for the design and delivery of staff development in both state and academic libraries. Reduced budgets were identified as inhibiting training in 1992 and 1993, and in libraries with and without award restructuring. Typical concerns are reflected in the following comments:

Within the university sector, there generally are limited funds available for training and development activities for general staff. When libraries are already operating under restricted budgets, there is also a significant staffing resources component involved in organising and implementing staff development and training activities.

Not award restructuring in isolation. Having to meet the ‘award restructuring bill’ will result in a reduced operational budget in the near future and therefore reduced staff Dev. Funds.

Budget. Although staff dev’t [sic] vote is cushioned within the library’s budget, large overall declines don’t help.
1) Impact - long term; 2) Value for money; 3) Focus; We don’t seem to succeed too well in any of these areas.

Many comments were sharp and to the point:

- Budget restrictions; regional isolation (from staff development courses in capital cities).
- Reduced budgets; admin. arrangements of Government.
- Continued pressure to reduce government expenditure.
- Budget constraints.
- Reduced budgets.

Pressure to reduce expenditure and manage resources better in the face of cutbacks was a predominant issue although it is interesting to note that very few respondents linked this statement to the promised productivity increases which were supposed to result from award restructuring. In the researcher’s institution, many staff had either lost sight of, or failed to fully comprehend that wage rises they had accepted as part of their award restructure were given in return for increased productivity. Reduced budgets were identified as resulting in lower recruitment, fewer promotion opportunities and a shrinking staff profile.

*Training Guarantee Act*

Despite the fact that a small number of respondents had been able to use the TGA to boost their staff development budgets, for most, limited funds were available for training
and development activities, as libraries had alternative budget demands. The organisations wanted value for money from training activities. Those respondents who specifically cited the TGA as having had a positive effect on their staff development provision made comments such as:

- Increased commitment to staff development for staff at all levels.

- The % of salaries provides a benchmark for us to compare our expenditure on training with the standard.

- Allocation of 2% of salary vote from 1994 will be made.

- a) Keep more detailed records b) University now offers more staff development programs and more which are relevant to library. c) has raised general level of staff awareness about training.

- a) keep more records; b) Has raised general level of awareness about staff development.

- Justified increased expenditure on staff development.

- We are more methodical about recording the more informal types of staff development than before.

- More money now available for Staff Development.

- More money and time is devoted to training.

- It has made management more conscious of their training responsibilities.

- Required management to maintain more effective control over staff training expenditure.
Providing an expectation of participation in staff development programmes and funding for it.

Record keeping. May be useful if ever need to define minimum expenditure. I could do without some of the external fly by nights with expensive course offerings seducing the staff.

Ensures the dollar commitment and promotes a more structured approach.

More structured programmes available; more skills focussed programmes available; more emphasis on accountability.

The percentage has guaranteed the availability to training for all staff.

Greater appreciation of the benefits of training by University administrators - improved budgets for STD activities.

Formalised the recording of training and development.

More relevant external courses are now available for staff.

There were, however, respondents for whom the TGA had had no impact whatsoever.

The University takes the attitude that it was already spending in excess of its legal obligations, hence no additional funds were provided.

University has the attitude that it is already spending in excess of its legal obligations. Staff development in the library is funded entirely from Library funds. There is some University funded (subsidized) staff development but it is patchy.

... no significant additional training resources have been made available.

No. NB Staff development budgets always well above required minimums and courses attended are appropriately designed, run and supported. ie. they are ‘eligible programs’ under the Act.
The importance of SD was already recognised and funding allocated in excess of the legal minimum.

S.D. already very well supported in the ... Library (we spend more than minimum required).

We already had a higher level of training than the Act required.

We already spend far in excess of the requirement on training & development.

NTLS has always had a strong commitment to staff development. In 92/93 we spent more than 3% on S.Dev.

**Amalgamations**

Both state and academic libraries are dependent on their parent body’s philosophies, administrative arrangements and policies. Changes occurring at this level have a direct influence on each institution. In 1992, amalgamations between higher education institutions were highlighted as having had an influence on staff training and development - staff had to be trained to use different computer systems and be aware of new policies and service standards etc. - but amalgamations were not mentioned at all by the 1993 respondents.

Amalgamation requiring some retraining; Co-operative approaches between institutions could facilitate staff development; Greater recognition of staff as a key resource should result in more $’s for staff development despite budget demand overall.

Amalgamations continue to have both positive and negative effects.
Reduced budgets / redevelopment of State Library - both making life in general difficult.

Organisational restructuring, budget restrictions resulting in virtually nil recruiting & shrinking staff profile (staff development vote hasn’t been cut).

Loss of Library control & focus through amalgamation; budget cuts; staff freezes; commitment to the ongoing development of library services by Government & the community.

Amalgamations; drastically reduced budget; increased use of new technologies.

Amalgamations - 4 new, smaller campuses to plan for.

**Staff**

Growth in staff development and training had occurred over the years to meet staff needs for career development and to meet organisational goals. The increased pressure on staff to combine both work and training was identified by libraries, regardless of their award restructuring status. These increased pressures also included staff ceilings, replacement staff not being provided whilst training was undertaken and increased workloads. Some libraries stated that the needs of staff, and the organisation, should ideally be compatible, but there was an increased pressure to do more with less.

Overall workload of staff. Staff numbers have been static for several years but the volume of work has increased significantly.

Increased pressure to do more with less.

Budget, staff available to do training, staff expectations of type & amount of training they need to do their jobs.
There was a significant staff resource component involved in organising and implementing staff development and training activities. Staff needed a commitment to professionalism, which enabled them to acquire the skills required by the organisation, whilst working toward their own career. It was hoped that greater organisational recognition of staff as a necessary resource, would result in more money for staff development and training, despite overall reductions.

Introduction of formal performance appraisal systems. Possible devolution of greater HRM responsibility to line manager level (from central staff function).

Currently concentrating on 2 ‘f’ words: feedback and follow through both on training and staff development, which in this Library are opposite ends of one continuum.

Staff appraisal - the desire to provide staff with development programmes at a time when there are fewer opportunities for promotion - higher level positions.

Growth in SD over the years. Careful look at who is not getting developed.

Access to Programs

Availability of relevant courses with suitable trainers in an acceptable location were the main components identified to provide better access to staff development and training. Wider advertising was advocated to enable future planning. Libraries in regional areas highlighted isolation as inhibiting access to staff development and training.

[There is a] need for wider and earlier advertising for Professional Development Courses to allow forward planning of Staff Development Activities in the future.

Availability of suitable staff to run programs
Unpredictability of staff development opportunities makes it difficult to plan ahead, and to be ‘fair’.

As a relatively isolated institution we have access to fewer opportunities, & must plan carefully - piggyback on Brisbane seminars, gather a group & use the airfare to import a trainer, rather than send one person to Sydney for training, etc.

[There needs to be greater] availability of group training units such as AIMA

[Need] more programmes.

Technology

The rapid changes in technology, extension of automation and the increased use of new technology in libraries were the important issues identified which resulted in the constant need for the training of staff to upgrade their technical skills. Comments included:

Extension of automation; budget reductions.

Amalgamations; budget constraints; new technology

The rapid changes in technology require constant training/staff development.

Response to new technology; better management of resources in the face of cut-backs; development of a model for matching organisational needs & available skills.

1. Need to upgrade staff’s technological skills constantly. 2. Difficulty in receiving a real value for money return on investment in staff development/training courses, etc.

Training staff to cope with roles which are changing to bring them into greater contact with users. training staff to cope with new & constantly changing technology.
Time

Maintaining services to clients, whilst providing time to do the training, were the two issues identified in time management. Managers needed to view training as part of the job and not as days lost from work. Many libraries claimed that the “down time” when staff were away at training was increasingly hard to accommodate.

Maintaining a balance between having well trained staff available to serve the public & providing the time to do the training (when they are not available to serve the public).

The main inhibitor on staff development is the staff budget, not the staff development budget. Staff often find it difficult to make time to attend optional development events, as the library usage has increased greatly, and it has been difficult to increase the staff budget to match increased use.

Increased pressure to have staff attend development sessions, study leave, pracs, etc BUT no budget given to library to provide and replacement staffing.

Pressure on staff means hard to allow time off. Equality issues.

Willingness of managers to see training as part of the job and not as days lost from work.

Staffing levels. It is sometimes difficult for staff to feel they can attend staff development programs when they are extremely busy.

Staff shortages. Time, both for staff devt staff and for participants. I know this is perennial but its particularly acute here at present.

Difficulty of freeing staff from service points to allow attendance at courses; should be more inhouse peer training, but difficult to encourage staff to act as trainers; Staff
often don’t recognise own needs, especially for personal needs such as communication skills, reference interviews, telephone techniques. Unfortunately, if we don’t get the interpersonal interaction part right, it doesn’t matter how good our resources/services/facilities are - clients won’t use us!

**Curriculum**

Some libraries suggested the need for a skills based curriculum which was responsive to the changing roles of library staff. Involvement by the staff and trainers and an awareness of other institutions’ training issues was also important.

Available outside expertise is a critical factor in a regional area (for delivery and design of programs).

Budgets, access to new ideas and philosophies eg TQM, EO, concern that training responsibilities are at work sites, sense of involvement by staff and trainers, awareness of training issues in other institutions - including formal library training and possibilities of joint training with other institutions.

Range of training programs available. The lack of distinction between development and training.

Line managers need to have the freedom to develop and implement a very wide range of staff development programs. In my opinion we need to break out of the ‘word processing and stress management’ syndrome. The most effective program we have seen this year was a one day session organized by my A-V Manager which simply allowed staff to discuss their jobs in a relaxful [sic] environment.

Involvement of staff themselves in planning.

Availability of relevant courses for staff to attend; initiative of staff to be aware of and interested in the attendance of courses.
Modes of Delivery

The provision of a wide range of training modes was advocated including joint training with other institutions, peer training on-the-job, external courses and specific train-the-trainer programs so that improved training could be offered in-house.

(See also Table 5.4 - Most common mode of delivery)

Evaluation

Many libraries indicated evaluation was needed to ascertain whether the goals and objectives of the training had been met. Staff performance appraisal was a part of this process. As can be seen from Table 5.10, more libraries commented on the evaluation process in 1993 than in 1992. Some examples include:

Goals/objectives need to be set prior to the training being conducted; ie the trainee and their supervisors need to set the goals and discuss as to what the training is for. This then becomes the evaluation process.

Ability to identify an appropriate skills based curriculum against which existing skills can be matched and staff development needs identified on a “needs” rather than a “wants” basis. This needs to be continued with the results of a staff performance review and evaluation program once established.

Training must be focused and must be evaluated. Concentrate on outcomes and the end product.

Each of the areas above provide input to the overall staff development and training program. The task of including all these variables is difficult. A staff development and training program which meets the needs of each individual as well as those of the
organisation and its strategic directions is required. In order that libraries can use resources more effectively, staff development must be focussed and concentrate on the end result. Goals and objectives which align to a library’s strategic plan need to be set prior to training and supervisors need to work with their staff to ensure training is supported and reinforced in the workplace in order that the value of the training be maximised. Evaluation processes need to be established to ensure all these demands are met. In this way, libraries are far more likely to reap a return on their investment in staff development.

**ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AGAINST THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework as illustrated in Figure 3 in Chapter 4 was designed to collect data which might help answer the four research questions. The framework depicts two major arenas: Arena A is that of the federal government’s key microeconomic reform initiatives, namely workplace rearrangement initiatives and national training reforms; Arena B is that of Australian academic and state libraries. The research data are analysed below to determine the impact of A on B following the questions posed in Arena C of the framework.

*Do academic and state libraries know about award restructuring and enterprise bargaining? Have these libraries any experience of award restructuring and enterprise bargaining?*

The simple answer to this question is “yes”. At the time of the interviews and surveys respondents were all aware of award restructuring and of enterprise bargaining. Having
said this, however, it should be acknowledged that for libraries that had not undergone award restructuring (20 out of 42), there was some confusion as to intended outcomes. Even greater uncertainty shrouded the concept of enterprise bargaining, some respondents admitting that they knew very little about it. Only one respondent admitted to any first hand experience of enterprise bargaining. As stated earlier, respondents were evenly divided over whether enterprise bargaining would be beneficial to librarians and library technicians and many answered that they were unsure. Thus, at the time of data collection, the microeconomic reforms of workplace rearrangement had had limited impact.

To what extent do academic and state libraries understand the concepts embodied in the NTRA? Is there evidence of NFROT principles and competency standards impacting on the design and delivery of staff development in these libraries?

Specific questions were not asked about the NTRA in general. However, two open-ended questions were asked, one about the effect of the proposed industry competency standards on staff development (Q30) and the other about issues important to the design and delivery of staff development in the library (Q42). Question 30 revealed that most respondents thought the proposed development of Australia-wide library competency standards would have an effect on staff development (32 out of 42 in 1993). Examples of the comments, both positive and negative are given earlier in this chapter. However, from the researcher’s own knowledge of practice and from the published literature and professional conferences, it is clear that this aspect of the NTRA has been
slow to impact in any library sector and is not a major driver for staff development in either state or academic libraries. Question 42 gave respondents an opportunity to comment on any aspect of staff development design and delivery not covered elsewhere in the questionnaire. No specific reference was made to any of the NFROT principles, such as recognition of prior learning, nor of the other principles embodied in the NTRA. However, many of the NFROT principles do embrace accepted quality course design features, such as equity of access, flexible learning and ongoing monitoring and evaluation and the survey data reveal that in most libraries, all staff are eligible to attend staff development programs, a variety of modes of training are employed and evaluation of programs is the accepted norm. Links between other aspects of the NTRA and the survey findings are discussed in the next section.

*Is there evidence of the TGA having had any impact on staff development in these libraries?*

As demonstrated by comments under Financial Resources, the main impact of the *Training Guarantee Act* on staff development in some of the respondent libraries was to act as a stimulus for increased funding for training programs. The other area of impact was in improved record keeping of staff development participation and activities. Many academic libraries, however, said that their universities already spent well in excess of the amount required under the Act on training and development. Furthermore, the normal programs and training activities offered were all deemed “eligible” by the Australian Taxation Office. For these libraries, the TGA was irrelevant.
Are there differences in the impact of microeconomic reform between academic and state libraries?

The answer here is no. This surprised the researcher as, at the time of the preliminary study in 1991, it appeared that unlike academic libraries, state libraries were poised to embrace federal workplace and training reforms. It was due to expected different rates of impact between the two sectors that state libraries were included in the present study. Geographic differences were also anticipated. This assumption, which proved to be false, was based on the differences between federal and state political parties and their respective ideologies. It was wrongly thought that the uptake of the federal government’s reforms might be quicker in states of the same political allegiances. Similarly, it was incorrectly assumed that in states where there were a number of academic libraries, change of the type under investigation in this study might have been adopted more quickly due to the ability to share and draw from each other’s experiences.

Is there evidence of how quickly the microeconomic reform strategies impacted on academic and state libraries?

As previously discussed in this chapter, by the time of the second survey, just over half of the respondent libraries (22 out of 42) had undergone or had entered into the process of award restructuring. This represented a huge leap from the previous year where only 6 out of 45 libraries had taken the plunge. This aspect of the Government’s microeconomic reform was progressing very rapidly. With the exception of one library, enterprise bargaining was not yet part of the academic and state library experience,
although it was known about from other industry sectors. Library industry competency standards and their use to design curricula and to deliver competency-based training were non-existent. There was no evidence of any relevant competency standards from other industries being used either. The only acknowledgement of National Framework for the Recognition of Training principles came indirectly as stated above. Thus, at the time of the data collection for this study, neither academic nor state libraries could be seen to be adopting the changes wrought by the Government’s reforms, other than in award restructuring.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AGAINST THE NTRA**

Apart from analysing the survey findings against the conceptual framework, it is helpful at this point to summarise the findings of the surveys against the key features of the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA). These features are:

1. the introduction of flexible training pathways to meet individual and industry needs;

2. transferability and portability of skills within/across industries, enhancing career path options;

3. establishment of nationally recognised qualifications and course accreditation procedures; and

4. development of articulation and pathways between courses and institutions.

1. *Flexible training pathways to meet individual and industry needs.*
Each survey asked respondents about their modes of delivery. In 1992, on-the-job-training was found to be the most common mode of delivery. In 1993, this remained true for qualified library technicians, while external training was more commonly used to train librarians. However, the move towards external training sessions was equally evident in libraries whether they had restructured or not. Thus, libraries seem to have embraced a range of training modes, the emphasis changing according to the level of formal qualifications of staff (and presumably the impact of qualifications on the type of work performed in each library). This could be argued as meeting both individual and industry needs.

*Table 5.10: Training time*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>29 (64.4)</td>
<td>25 (59.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>16 (35.6)</td>
<td>17 (40.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As discussed in the findings above, in 1992 and in 1993, restructured awards were less likely to emphasise formal qualifications than those as yet unrestructured. This suggests a more flexible attitude to the incorporation of experience or recognition of prior learning as embodied in the national training reform agenda, through its National Framework for the Recognition of Training. This more flexible attitude of libraries which have undergone award restructuring would conceivably enable them to adopt competency standards as an alternative to formal qualifications for demonstrating ability.
Table 5.11: Skills vs qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Qualifications</td>
<td>19 (44.2)</td>
<td>10 (23.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>5 (11.1)</td>
<td>1 (2.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>19 (44.2)</td>
<td>5 (11.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>26 (61.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access to training can also be examined in light of the first key feature of the NTRA. In both surveys, part-time staff appear to have good access to training. Casual staff seem more likely to receive training if they are qualified librarians but the overall accessibility of casual staff to training declined slightly. Libraries will need to explore access of casual staff to training, particularly in light of the introduction of competency standards. Can a library afford to deny training to a valued casual if she or he cannot demonstrate competence in all areas of work?

2. Skills and career path options.

Multi-skilling as discussed in the findings above was viewed favourably by respondents in both 1992 and 1993. For many libraries, particularly the smaller ones, it was seen as essential and had already been the workplace norm for many years. Even in large libraries where the possibility of highly specialised staff exists, specialists are often required to perform other duties, for example, the curator of rare books is required to undertake administrative, training and promotional activities for the rare books
collection. Thus this aspect of the NTRA was already embedded in library workplace practice.
Table 5.12: Career paths improved under new awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library Technicians</td>
<td>Librarians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3 (50.0)</td>
<td>3 (42.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3 (50.0)</td>
<td>4 (57.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for career paths, in both surveys many respondents were not able to answer the question about career paths as the new awards were not yet in place.

Table 5.13: Career paths will improve under new award

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library Technicians</td>
<td>Librarians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19 (63.3)</td>
<td>11 (36.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11 (36.7)</td>
<td>19 (63.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, when asked if they thought career paths would improve in the future, the 1992 responses indicated that this would be so mainly for library technicians. In 1993, the margin of difference for those answering in the affirmative for library technicians and librarians had narrowed considerably. (See Table 5.13 above). This indicates a slow realisation that the restructured awards might be able to offer improved career track options for both professionals and para-professionals.

3. Nationally recognised qualifications and course accreditation procedures.

In the library industry, both nationally recognised qualifications and course accreditation procedures already exist and have done for librarians for the past twenty five years via the accreditation or course recognition process undertaken by the Australian Library and Information Association. The ALIA has also ensured nationally consistent and portable qualifications for library technicians since 1978. It is in the area of continuing professional development (CPD) that ALIA and the industry are looking to the NFROT principles and competency standards to provide a means of:

- accrediting genuine, self-initiated, self-managed learning that is relevant to the profession;

- a basis of national planning of CPD allocations from the resources of the profession; and

- evidence of the contribution of CPD to furthering of professional standards.

National library industry competency standards, as well as appropriate cross industry standards, such as those pertaining to administration and health and safety, have also
been used as the basis for writing the first national core curriculum for library technicians.

4. Articulation of pathways between courses and institutions.

The surveys did not address this feature of the NTRA directly but this is possibly an issue which might be encompassed by enterprise bargaining, particularly if competency standards are introduced across the industry. Most respondents were unsure as to how enterprise bargaining would affect staff. Those who saw it as beneficial felt that it would create more flexibility in terms of hours and modes of working, allow rewards for good performance and would give staff a greater sense of involvement. On the negative side, the process was seen as threatening and purely driven by the desire to save money. It was felt that in the long term, it would affect overtime and penalty rate payments. One respondent commented:

Enterprise bargaining has been in effect [in this institution] since 1989. The overall effect for librarians is that those who could argue well have done better in the salary area than others. This has led to inequalities of salaries for staff with similar responsibilities. Library technicians have been inclined to accept what is on offer rather than negotiate anything more complex.

The 1993 open-ended responses on enterprise bargaining reflected that respondents were unsure as to how it would affect their staff. This is illustrated by the number of missing cases to this question.
PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TERM “STAFF DEVELOPMENT”

As discussed in Chapter 4, a phenomenological approach was taken with one of the questions asked of each case study interviewee, namely, *What is your understanding of the term “staff development”*? The main outcome of this approach is to establish categories of description denoting interviewees’ conceptions of the term. As the categories of description are logically related to each other, the logic of the relations are diagrammatically represented in the form of an outcome space. Since there were only seven respondents, the facility to create ‘pools of meaning’ is limited. However, it is possible to state commonality of understanding. Even with only seven respondents, it is surprising to find such a rich range of concepts of the term emerge.

*Pools of Meaning*

The seven responses to the question were examined by asking the following questions:

- How does the respondent construe the phenomenon of staff development?
- What concepts are used to explain it?
- Are similarities with other phenomena introduced?

From this process, concepts were grouped into twelve pools of meaning. Some pools contained multiple responses. These responses, however, embodied like concepts.

*Table 5.14: Pools of meaning - twelve conceptions of staff development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. TRAINING</th>
<th>2. ABILITY TO PERFORM JOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Training opportunities</td>
<td>• Provides for effective functioning of role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Training - job related/skills
• Training inter-related to staff development
• Training encompassed in staff development
• Training narrower than development

3. CAREER DEVELOPMENT
• Base for future career development
• Career development courses exchanges
• Career planning

4. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
• Development not directly job related
• Personal development
• Provides context

5. HUMAN RESOURCES
• Human resource development

6. MANAGEMENT
• Major management strategy
• Staff development linked with human resources management

7. PLANNING
• Meshing of staff profiles with library goals
• Human resource planning
• Future requirements
• Succession planning
• Strategic planning

8. COURSE EVALUATION
• Courses which have value both to staff and library service

9. FINANCE
• Training dollar
• Link with financial responsibility

10. LEGISLATION
• Training Guarantee Act

11. MOTIVATION
• Way of preventing staff from becoming jaded

12. FLEXIBILITY
• Multi-skilling

Categories of Description

The twelve pools of meaning were examined to establish conceptions of staff development and were categorised as follows:

1. Training.
In this conception, staff development is seen primarily as an enabling mechanism, as a tool to offer staff a range of opportunities which benefit both the individual and the organisation. This includes ensuring an individual’s ability to perform his or her job and being multi-skilled to offer flexibility to both the individual and the organisation. Training is seen as a subset of staff development. (Incorporates numbers 1, 2 and 12 from Table 5.14).

2. Career development.

In this conception, staff development is seen as a means of continuing professional education which enhances an individual’s career prospects. It encompasses personal development. (Incorporates numbers 3 and 4 from Table 5.14).

3. Human resources management.

In this conception, staff development is seen as a management function. This includes planning for future human resources requirements (succession planning) and is seen as part of the strategic planning process. (Incorporates numbers 5, 6 and 7 from Table 5.14).

4. Financial resources management.

In this conception, staff development is seen as a budgetary responsibility for the organisation. (This incorporates number 9 from Table 5.14).

5. Legislation.
In this conception, staff development is seen as a legal requirement of the organisation. (This incorporates number 10 from Table 5.14).


In this conception, staff development is seen as a way of providing job satisfaction and preventing staff from becoming bored and losing interest in their work. (This incorporates number 11 from Table 5.14).

7. Curriculum evaluation.

In this conception, staff development is seen as the provision of courses which have value to both the individual and the organisation. (This incorporates number 8 from Table 5.14).

A co-judge (a colleague) was used to test the reliability of these categories of description. The co-judge was given the complete transcripts and was requested to independently assign categories of description. The percentage of codings made in common prior to consultation was calculated. Consultation concerning the codings made differently took place (in this case only one category was viewed differently) and adjustments were made to codings as agreed by both parties.

From this very small sample, it can be seen that “staff development” contains a number of different concepts. “Training” was generally conceived as a subset of staff development or as a narrower concept. Career as well as personal development was seen to be a feature by three respondents, and the planning aspect, the need to design staff development to help the organisation achieve its goals, featured prominently (four
respondents). What is surprising is that motivation and cost were mentioned by only one respondent each. According to the literature, employee motivation is one of the key advantages of staff development and from the open ended survey questions, not enough money for staff development was a frequent concern of respondents in both 1992 and 1993. Again, only one interviewee mentioned multi-skilling, yet, from the surveys, this was seen to be a positive outcome of the training requirements of award restructuring. Not one interviewee mentioned competence or competencies as such, although this may have been implied in the two responses which mentioned the ability to perform a job effectively as an aspect of staff development. Perhaps the term was not yet part of the language of or thinking about staff development. The literature on staff development also stresses the importance of competence in creating commitment to the organisation and the importance of keeping technical skills and professional knowledge current. Neither of these aspects was mentioned by interviewees. Perhaps they are taken for granted.

**Outcome Space**

The outcome space of the interviewees’ conceptions of staff development schematises further the essential differences between the categories of description. Whereas the categories of description denote the meaning or the referential aspect of the conceptions, the outcome space focusses on the structural aspects of the conceptions. The outcome space in this instance may be described in terms of the perceived benefits of staff development for the organisation and its employees and the enabling infrastructures, both internal and external to the organisation, which support it.
The above diagram illustrates the logical relations between the categories on the basis of perceived benefits of staff development for the individual staff member, perceived benefits for the organisation, benefits which are mutual and the infrastructure which stimulates and enables these benefits to be delivered. It is a pictorial representation of the space over which the interviewees’ thoughts ranged. It provides a map of territory in terms of which we can interpret how people conceive of a reality, in this case, staff development.
Observations on Findings

The phenomenological exploration of interviewees’ understanding of the term “staff development” was interesting in that whilst revealing a rich array of meanings, the issues being examined by this study, namely the NTRA and workplace rearrangement, were not reflected in the responses. Again, this might be explained by the fact that these issues were too new, that the changes intended to be brought about by these federal policy initiatives had not had time to permeate, or that they were known about but deemed irrelevant.

As stated in Chapter 1, the library and information industry has always had a tradition of multi-skilling, and although this could be seen to be particularly the case in small libraries where each employee has to cover for the other, it has also been true in some areas of large libraries, such as academic and state libraries, for example in processing and loans. As such, the notion of multi-skilling which partnered SEP was not new in libraries and was accommodated with a minimum of fuss. Yet other aspects of award restructuring were less comfortable, that of productivity increases for example. Service industries, such as libraries, are still grappling with defining what constitutes a measurable productivity increase, especially as they move to enterprise bargaining arrangements.

The other factor which may have influenced the lack of definite findings in this study is that librarians if they choose to join a union, have not one but over sixty unions of which they could become members. This means that their voice in any one union tends to be small.Whilst currently only two main unions are represented in the state and academic library sectors (the National Tertiary Education Union and the (State) Public Service

Union), at the time of the surveys, library staff in the researcher’s library were represented by no fewer than three unions - the NTEU, the LMHU (the Liquor, Miscellaneous and Allied Hospitality Workers Union) and the Commonwealth Public Service Union. The resultant award restructure which was agreed to represented all general staff at the University and as such it covered a wide range of general staff from gardeners and cleaners to computer analysts, solicitors and senior administrators.

Given the complexity of accommodating such disparate groups of staff into one, ten-level classification structure, it is hardly surprising that the various types of staff working in the library were not entirely satisfied with their classification translations largely due to the erosion of the importance of their qualifications (the award reflects recognition of prior learning in that it allows for equivalent knowledge and experience). Similarly, all three unions were represented in a single bargaining unit in striking the University of Melbourne’s first enterprise agreement, thus the library staff were one voice among many when it came to having their concerns taken into account. These are some of the reasons respondents were less than enthusiastic about the workplace rearrangement questions in the surveys.

What is surprising is the reluctance of respondents, most of whom were senior and experienced human resources library managers, to reveal any depth of knowledge of the underlying principles of award restructuring and the structural efficiency principle. Perhaps the concepts underlying SEP failed to have a major impact as they were already subscribed to by libraries which have had a long tradition of multi-skilling and of training and developing their employees. One respondent commented that her library had not been influenced by what was being done externally, stating that they had always
been one step ahead. “I can’t see that award restructuring will make any difference now - I can’t see it will have an impact”. Or perhaps managers in libraries were simply ill-informed and failed to understand the full extent of these reforms.

When it came to enterprise bargaining, many respondents claimed ignorance. Admittedly, this form of industrial negotiation was very new to both sectors at the time of the surveys, but it had been given wide coverage by both print and electronic media. One respondent, a chief librarian, commented that it would mean pay rises for staff but, in turn, this would result in fewer staff. Four years down the track, this is indeed the outcome for many libraries in the academic sector.

The fact that the dual and complementary reforms of award restructuring and the NTRA were driven by a federal labor government, gave rise to the question of whether libraries in states and territories which also had labor governments in office at the time of the surveys had adopted award restructuring more quickly than states which had conservative governments (represented by the liberal, national and country parties). At the time of the 1992 survey, of the four Australian Capital Territory respondents, two had already had their awards restructured. A Labor Government (ALP) was in office. Of the remaining five restructured libraries, only one, had restructured in an area where a conservative government was in office, and that was in the Northern Territory (CLP). This would suggest that an alignment of political party between state and territory governments and the federal government had been advantageous to the speed with which award restructuring had been implemented. However, if the situation in 1993 is analysed, the picture is less clear. By this time, twenty-two libraries had undergone
award restructuring. Of these, twelve were in ALP states or territories and ten in conservative state or territory governments (See summary in Table 5.1).

**Table 5.15: Responses by State and Territory Government**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>LIB/NP</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>LIB/NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>LIB/NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ALP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>LIB/NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>LIB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>LIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>CLP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>CLP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ALP is Australian Labour Party; LIB/NP is Liberal National Party Coalition; CLP is Country Liberal Party.

Please note: One of the missing 1993 respondents whose library had restructured in 1992 was from WA. The other 2 were from VIC. These were due to amalgamations.

From Table 5.15 above, it appears that the federal government’s reform had had an effect, even in areas which had differing politics. Thus, whilst adoption rates of award restructuring implementation were more rapid in states and territories where federal and
state labor governments were aligned, it appears that federal government interests override those of state politics where the policies are national.

**Summary**

This chapter explains the way in which both the data from the quantitative and qualitative research were analysed and presents the findings. The case for stating that award restructuring has impacted on the way staff development is planned, implemented and evaluated cannot be strongly supported by the findings. Although by the time of the 1993 survey the number of libraries to have entered into award restructuring had risen dramatically, it was still too early for respondents to feel confident about the changes that would result. The same holds true for respondents’ knowledge about the NTRA and, in particular, about competency standards and other aspects of workplace rearrangement, such as enterprise bargaining. As mentioned in Chapter 1, if the 1993 questionnaire were to be administered to the same group of respondents now, the knowledge levels of these issues would be far greater, and thus the responses would differ. These responses are revisited and synthesised in Chapter 7 against the backdrop of recent developments in the NTRA and workplace rearrangement as discussed in Chapter 6 and against the four key research questions of this study.
CHAPTER SIX

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1994

In the period since the survey data were collected and analysed, there has been further public comment on all major aspects of this study. As stated in the first chapter, if the surveys were to be conducted now, there may well be a greater demonstration of knowledge or awareness of the issues examined. The purpose of this chapter is to update developments and expressions of public opinion on aspects of both the national training reform agenda and workplace rearrangement in Australia as recorded in the literature.

As discussed in the first three chapters, the principal premise underpinning both award restructuring and the national training reform agenda (NTRA) was the need to improve the skills/training base of Australian workers so as to enable the nation to compete more efficiently and effectively in the global economy. This premise was based on an assertion that Australia was a ‘low training’ country, that is, a country that spent little money on training. Several authors have questioned this assertion (Stromback and Moy (1989), Sweet (1989), Borland (1990), Chapman and Stemp (1992), and Sloan (1994).

High investment in training is a necessary prerequisite for economic success.

The rationale that high levels of investment in training are a necessary prerequisite for economic success has been challenged. The original data that supported this proposition were rubbery to say the least. According to estimates produced by Krbavac and
Stretton for the early 1980s, private sector expenditure on formal education and training, as a proportion of gross domestic product, was 0.9% in Australia, 1.2% in the USA, 1.4% in Japan and 2.0% in West Germany (Dawkins, 1988, p. 66). Using a similar method and data sources, a 1988 Economic Planning Advisory Council discussion paper produced a table which indicated that public spending on education and training in Australia was largely on a par with some other large economies, but private funding was very low by international standards. The latter figure for Australia was 0.8% compared with a figure for West Germany of 2.1%. This table is reproduced below as Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Funding</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Economic Planning Advisory Council (1988, Table 3.1)

Stromback and Moy (1989) have attacked the figures contained in the above table for a number of reasons. The Australian calculations for private spending were based on a very narrow sample of very large firms. Moreover, the lack of a consistent definition of private sector spending on training across the countries makes comparisons hazardous to say the least. Differential industrial structures between the countries would be
expected to produce different training expenditure patterns. In other words, a lower rate of private sector investment in training in Australia does not necessarily connote underinvestment.

More recent OECD figures on the incidence of formal enterprise training across a number of countries are presented in Table 6.2. Figures are shown according to employees’ tenure with current employer. In terms of these comparisons, the proposition of Australia being a low training spender is, to some degree, undermined. 40.2% of Australian employees who had been with their current employer for between six and nine years, had received formal enterprise training in the previous year (although the length and/or quality of the training cannot be determined). Roughly equivalent figures were 49.9% in Finland, 74.1% in Japan, 29.0% in the Netherlands, 37.8% in Norway and 22.4% in the USA. With the clear exception of Japan, the incidence of formal enterprise training in Australia would appear to be in line with these other countries, and indeed markedly exceeds the USA figure.
Table 6.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In-house</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>training</td>
<td>company</td>
<td>company</td>
<td>company</td>
<td>Company</td>
<td>company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>courses</td>
<td>training</td>
<td>training</td>
<td>paid for</td>
<td>paid for</td>
<td>training since</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>during</td>
<td>courses</td>
<td>since</td>
<td>training during</td>
<td>during</td>
<td>joining the firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>previous year</td>
<td>during</td>
<td>joining the firm</td>
<td>previous two years</td>
<td>previous year</td>
<td>firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 to 1 year</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 to 5 years</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 years</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19 years</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years and over</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes:  
- Tenure categories are <1 year, 1 to <2 years, 2 to <3 years, 3 to <5 years, 5 to <10 years, 10 to <20 years, and 20 years and over.
- Tenure categories are <1 year, 1 year, 2 years, 3-4 years, 5 to <10 years, 10 to <15 years, 15 to <20 years, and 20 years and over.
- Tenure categories are <1 year, 1 to <3 years, 3 to <10 years, and 10 years and over.
- The two first tenure categories refer to <9 months, and from 9 months to <5 years.

Focussing on the entry-level (employees with zero to one year employment tenure)

Figure 6.1 again illustrates that the extent of enterprise training in Australia is not dissimilar to rates recorded in other countries, apart from Japan. Again, the USA is the clear ‘scrooge’ with only 8.4% of employees of zero to one year employment tenure having received formal company training since joining the firm.
While the data informing Table 6.2 and Figure 6.1 are arguably narrow in themselves, they probably provide a better basis for international comparisons than those contained in Table 6.1.

Sloan (1994) questions the argument that workers and firms recoup the costs of training over time and that where there is substantial investment in worker training, lengthy employment tenure will also be found. She argues that employment tenure may be high for reasons unconnected with training expenditure (social mores of a country, for instance). Indeed, high employment tenure may be the cause rather than the consequence of training investment (p. 148). Sloan presents some international comparisons of employment tenure and these are reproduced below. Figure 6.2 shows the proportion of workers who have been with their current employer for less than one year (i.e., short-term employees), and the median employment tenure for each country.
Sloan states:

Certainly Australia has a relatively high proportion of short term employees. However, countries with higher proportions include Canada, the Netherlands and the US. Australia has one of the lowest median tenures, of 3.5 years, exceeding only the Netherlands and the US (p.149).

The proportion of workers with their current employer for under five years, as well as the average employment tenure, are given in Figure 6.3:
Figure 6.3: Proportion of workers with current employer under 5 years and average tenure, 1991 (adapted from Sloan 1994, p. 150).

Again, the figures underline the relatively short tenure of employees with the one firm in Australia, although the figures for a number of other economies are not too dissimilar - Canada, the Netherlands, the UK and the USA.

Limitations of international comparisons of training efforts

Direct and indirect international comparisons must be made with caution. Not only do data and definition problems confound comparisons, a number of the figures are based on model estimates, introducing additional elements of uncertainty to the comparisons. Sloan points to the complications which arise from the statute-based constraints on the dismissal of workers, as well as government-mandated training obligations that apply in a number of European countries (p.150). What the figures reflect is often not the outcome of unfettered market forces, but rather a complex interaction of market forces, institutions and government policies. Thus it is impossible to draw clear, unambiguous conclusions about relative training efforts from international comparisons.
Sweet argues that broad international comparisons cannot demonstrate:

that there is, or would be, a productivity gain from increased investment in training, either at the broad national level or at the level of individual enterprise. From the marketing perspective, the latter is a particularly serious problem, for it is at the level of the enterprise that employers will ask what advantages there might be for them in increasing training funding or in changing the institutional arrangements for training (1989, p. 336).

These caveats apply no less to the loose associations found between a country’s economic performance and training investment. A clear message of many of the government reports in Australia (for example, Dawkins, 1988) is that higher levels of investment in training, particularly by the private sector, lead to superior economic performance, measured by growth, productivity, unemployment, inflation etc. Until recently, Japan and Germany were the most cited examples of high training countries also being very prosperous economies. In Germany’s case, there is a distinct possibility that its past superior economic performance may have been in spite of its regulated training arrangements, rather than because of them. It is interesting to note that there are now widespread complaints of the apprenticeship system in that country, with young people increasingly shunning the apprenticeship route and small employers attempting to introduce more flexible training arrangements (The Economist, 1994). There are obviously complex and multi-factoral explanations for economies’ relative performances.

More persuasive evidence of a possible link between skill formation and productivity is to compare enterprises across countries. Sweet (1989) summarises a number of enterprise-level studies, which point to the value of investment in skill formation, overlaid
with particular forms of work organisation in promoting high productivity. The OECD (1993, p. 137) also notes:

[Case] studies of German, British and French firms have suggested that, partly due to the wider availability of intermediate craft qualifications, German firms tend to organise work more broadly and to be more productive.

It is interesting in this context to quote Sweet’s conclusion (1989, p. 337) on the French evidence that “high levels of investment in training by particular industries arise very much from their operating environment. High levels of training effort seem to be spurred by technological and structural change, by capital intensiveness and by operating in a highly competitive market.”

This has clear implications for government policy - that a single and uniform approach to training arrangements, for example, the Training Guarantee Levy as introduced by the Australian Government in 1990, is misguided, a point emphasised by Chapman and Stemp (1992). Tempting though it may be to see government action capable of correcting, or at least offsetting, training market failures such as worker turnover, poaching of industry-generic competencies, diffusion of technology and institutional distortions to wage structure and work patterns, it must be recognised that government policy can also fail.

At a general level, it would seem that a deep distrust of market and market forces underpins the NTRA. What is required, given this apparent distrust, are various forms of government intervention to increase the quantity of training, to reduce cyclical variations in the amount of training provided, to improve the quality of training and to improve access to training for certain groups in the community. In a nub, these would seem to be
the objectives of the NTRA. More recently, an additional objective has been the establishment of nationally consistent training and skill or competency standards.

The precise geneses of the NTRA are unclear. Certainly the report of a trade union mission to Western Europe, *Australia Reconstructed* (1987), was important in terms of signalling training and skill formation as central elements of the union movement’s future agenda. The early Kirby report of the Committee of Enquiry into Labour Market Programs (1985) was also important in pointing to weaknesses in the apprenticeship model and arguing the case for an alternative, structured training pathway from school to work. However, probably the most significant early development was the advent of award restructuring, formally heralded by the promulgation of the structural efficiency principle (SEP) by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in August 1988. Key elements of the award restructuring process have been the insertion of skill-based career paths in awards, new training arrangements, fewer worker classifications, multi-skilling, new forms of work organisation and reduced demarcations.

In recognition of the implications for the public training system arising from award restructuring, the Federal Government set up the Deveson Committee to investigate the issues. The result was the report, *Training Costs and Award Restructuring* (1990), which argued for a dynamic and competitive training sector, with public providers able to charge fees. A number of other government reports have been important in driving the NTRA, including the reports of Finn, Mayer and Carmichael (as discussed in Chapter 2).
The NTRA revisited

Although described at length in Chapter 2, it is useful to summarise the key features of the NTRA here before examining public comment on its perceived efficacy. The principal elements of the NTRA are:

- the establishment of the National Training Board in 1990 to promote, co-ordinate and endorse competency standards in industry;
- competency-based training (CBT), marking a shift away from time-serving as the basis for accreditation of training to testing for the attainment of specific competencies, including recognition of prior learning;
- the establishment of the Australian Standards Framework (ASF) in which competencies are allotted to eight levels across all industries;
- the establishment of the Australian Vocational Certificate Training System as a new pathway arrangement for entry-level training, incorporating apprenticeships and traineeships;
- the States and Federal Government agreeing to a national approach to vocational education and training matters, including the ceding of TAFE funding to the newly established Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) and an agreement for a national framework for the recognition of training (NFROT);
- an enterprise training stream, with the device of NFROT to articulate enterprise standards to national, recognised levels, and scope for enterprises to register as recognised training providers;
- various State Government initiatives in the training field, including the accreditation of courses and training providers; and
• initiatives in relation to the recognition of immigrants’ qualifications (for example, NOOSR).

There was also the introduction in 1990 of the Training Guarantee Levy which required all but very small firms to expend at least 1.5% of their payroll on approved training. As discussed in Chapter 2, this levy is currently in suspension.

In view of the above, it is hardly surprising that a number of commentators have been moved to remark on the extraordinarily complex, confusing and centralised nature of the NTRA. Indeed, the very high degree of bureaucratic involvement and the low involvement of industry representatives appear to have increasingly weakened the link between the NTRA and the competitive requirements of enterprises. At the same time, the fork in the road of the development of the NTRA which occurred in the late 1980s, with the choice between industry-specific responses and nationally consistent ‘solutions’ - the latter fork was the one that was followed - was clearly a critical stage. Using the metal industry as the model (it was also used as the model for award restructuring), the hope has been that a new and dynamic national system of vocational education and training will emerge to replace the admittedly patchy and archaic vocational education and training arrangements that existed in the mid-1980s.

The fundamental flaw in the whole process has been a lack of appreciation of why training markets fail and how these imperfections can be remedied. Not all firms or industries are likely to endorse imposed outside accreditation of their training, or more particularly, imposed accreditation linked to national skill standards (ASF). Indeed, an unintended consequence of such a policy may be that firms show less willingness to
invest in training because of their decreased ability to defend their investment in training by retaining workers. In other words, their capacity to impose some enterprise or industry specificity is reduced. This is a distinct possibility in very competitive industries (e.g., retailing) where training provided has a large degree of ‘proprietorship’ and is seen as being part of an enterprise’s competitive advantage. These enterprises will quite understandably resist being dragged into national accreditation of training. On the other hand, firms in more oligopolistic industries may be willing to band together, with or without government intervention to devise industry-based training strategies. This is true of the library and information services industry, where national training and development programs were run by the professional association, ALIA, long before the advent of industry training and advisory bodies.

**Criticisms of the NTRA**

On the one hand, the NTRA has been criticised for failing to respond adequately to the demand side of the labour market and the needs of employers in particular (Sweet, 1993; Curtain, 1994); on the other, the ‘new vocationalism’ of the NTRA - a concern with bringing together general and vocational education, so that general education is seen as relevant to work and vocational education is seen as broader than specific work-based skills - is seen to fail to deliver the intended equity and access outcomes. This is a complex and ambitious policy agenda seeking to integrate aspects of industry, social and educational policy, nationally, via the schooling, TAFE and higher education sectors, the private training providers and within industries, occupations and workplaces. It therefore confronts a large number of different institutional arrangements
and histories and a myriad of vested and, at times, competing interests, such as state-federal relations. As Byrne (1994) states:

the lack of overall commitment to the agenda by state and territory governments ... has resulted in extensive duplication of effort which nowhere more apparent than in relation to the issues of curriculum development and national accreditation of courses, the essential link between industry competency standards and delivery of quality training (p. 54).

A fundamental reason for perceived difficulties with implementation of an effective national vocational education and training system is the failure of Australian and state governments and/or authorities to commit to the reforms in practice as they have in theory. Byrne gives concrete evidence of this failure, citing the non-operation of NFROT, the inability to popularise the reforms in a coherent way at state level, the total absence of publicity on the supposedly imminent new system of qualifications, and the almost complete burial of the ‘Mayer’ key competencies as a national initiative. These, he says, are all manifestations of some states’ refusal to give up ‘sovereignty’ over any meaningful aspect of VET. This is despite their full involvement and agreement to the national goals, structures and processes.

In response to the widespread criticism, a major review of the implementation of the reforms over the last five years was commissioned by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). The review was conducted by the Allen Consulting Group (ACG) in 1994. The ACG report argued that a training market could only be fostered if employers, as the major clients of the public VET system, were given government funding to purchase themselves the type of training they required. Known as the ‘user buys’ approach, it was suggested that this strategy be phased in by handing the
government funding for the off-the-job training component of apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements directly to enterprises. This would enable employers and employees to decide jointly how the funds would be spent. It was envisaged that a group training scheme or equivalent intermediary could act formally for the enterprise if it were small or otherwise lacked the resources to make informed decisions.

Curtain (1995) outlines five different approaches used by similar economies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of government funded training services. They are:

1. the allocation of funds by government to semi-autonomous agencies within the public sector through regular performance agreements based on specific goals and targets to be achieved (Further Education Funding Council, U.K.);
2. the allocation of funds by government through competitive tendering under specified conditions to both public and private sector service providers (U.K., Sweden and New Zealand);
3. franchising by government of intermediary bodies to act as purchasers of services from service providers (Training and Enterprise Councils in the U.K.);
4. providing access to public funds for independent intermediary bodies to purchase services on behalf of their members (public law or compulsory chambers of commerce in many European countries, most notably Germany and France); and
5. the direct purchase of services by the client/consumer (or, enterprises purchasing training for their employees). In the U.K., training credits or vouchers are to be paid to school leavers to ensure coordination and competition between training providers. To help individuals choose an appropriate course, additional resources
are to be directed to providing better career counselling services. The New Zealand Government, on the other hand, has given the power to purchase entry-level training directly to employers provided it is coordinated through an Industry training Organisation. (pp 93-97).

The ANTA response to the proposal in the ACG’s *Successful Reform: Review of the Implementation of the National Training Reform Agenda* to introduce a strongly market-oriented strategy of ‘user buys’ has been to change the concept in a significant way. ANTA has opted for ‘user choice’. ‘User buys’ puts the funding and the choice into the hands of either the enterprise or the trainee, while ‘user choice’ leaves the choice with the enterprise but the funds continue to be allocated by a central authority.

ANTA’s reason for this choice was based on a desire to build on the existing strengths of the VET system through encouraging partnerships among providers, employers and employees and to relieve businesses of unnecessary contractual and audit requirements. It is too early to evaluate this approach, but criticisms are already being expressed that very small employers (often with fewer than five employees), who make up the majority of employers of apprentices and trainees, will lack the resources to negotiate appropriate training. ANTA suggests providing brokerage services, but currently these serve only about 10% of apprentices and their employers (Curtain, p. 98). It is felt that the continuation of funding by an all powerful central authority will also result in an inequality in the training market between, on the supply side, the large, well resourced TAFE systems and, on the demand side, the capacity of most enterprises to have their voice heard.
**Award Restructuring**

The OECD (1990, p. 67) report on the Australian economy noted that “since mid 1987...increasing emphasis has been placed on the relation between the industrial relations system, labour flexibility and productivity growth”. Part of this process saw the abandonment of uniform and centralised wage determination and a shift towards greater decentralisation, but within a managed national context. The first part of this process was the restructuring and efficiency principle through Accord Mark IV in which wage increases were conditional upon changes to work and management practices, reduced demarcation and increased multi-skilling. This process continued under the next phase of the Accord with the August 1988 SEP tying wage increases to progress in the restructuring of awards and workplace practices for the purposes of improving industry efficiency. This process was further reinforced by the 1989 national wage case decision which in part linked wage increases to demonstrable progress in the restructuring of awards.

Thus award restructuring was intended to remove barriers to training by reducing the number of worker classifications, providing for multi-skilling, breaking down demarcations and integrating training into career planning. It is not clear, however, what has been the net effect of the changes ushered in by award restructuring (a point illustrated by the research findings of this paper). Certainly the number of worker classifications has been reduced in many awards, and there has been a trade-off between wage increases and promised delivery of increased productivity, but it is interesting to note Still and Mortimer’s (1993, p. 99) conclusion from their survey of small and medium enterprises:
There is also some evidence of multi-skilling, career path planning and training [arising from award restructuring]. However, given that less than half the respondents perceived any positive benefits from award restructuring and only 32% saw any further development occurring in terms of greater integration of training and appraisal and so on, there would appear to be a need for a major attitude change by management ... if restructuring is to be taken further.

Similarly modest conclusions about the impact of award restructuring emerged from a survey of managers of workplaces of large enterprises conducted in 1990 (see Sloan and Wooden, 1990). The inconclusive findings of the survey results reported in this research are, it seems, not restricted to the library and information industry.

It should be noted that whilst to peak trade union bodies, award restructuring involved creating simplified and modern award structures, career paths, training opportunities for all, integration of awards and higher minimum wage rates, all to be achieved in the context of a strategic approach, to many unionists at enterprise level, award restructuring was a matter of how to achieve pay increases. Employers have responded in a range of ways, from active support to mere grudging compliance. The central issue, argues Dunoon (1990), is not about the restructuring of awards, but about the restructuring of Australian workplaces - such as changes in strategic direction, culture, management structure, production technology and form of work organisation (p. 31) and this shift is evident in the current round of enterprise bargaining.

**Enterprise bargaining**

The move towards decentralism begun by award restructuring was further extended with the October 1991 enterprise bargaining principle. This provided greater scope for
collective bargaining and removed some of the constraints associated with earlier phases of the decentralised process. Outcomes were more a matter of determination between the parties, rather than being set by the Industrial Relations Commission.

These developments placed greater emphasis upon the workplace, with conditions at the workplace, rather than state or national conditions, having having a greater impact on industrial relations outcomes than in the past. They reinforced the requirement for detailed workplace information and allow a greater influence from regional factors in determining industrial relations processes and outcomes (Alexander et al, 1995, p. 114).

Addressing the Institute of Company Directors in 1993, the then Prime Minister, Mr. Paul Keating, listed the features of labour market reform that his government would work towards. These included enterprise agreements largely replacing awards, scope for non-union bargaining, fewer and simpler awards, and awards acting only as safety nets. The 1993 Industrial Relations Reform Act is pro-union, and the form of bargaining is strictly prescribed. Awards and the Industrial Relations Commission remain centre-stage. Nonetheless, Sloan sees it as having one breakthrough - more in principle than practical - and that is the Enterprise Flexibility Agreement provision. She states that to countenance even the possibility of non-union bargaining is one step on the road to labour market reform (The Weekend Australian, Jan. 13-14, p. 6). While thwarted in his first attempt to deliver on the vision for labour market reform, a second (partial) attempt was made in the Working Nation paper released in May 1994. Here a suggestion was made that awards be stripped of their prescriptive detail and that only a number of core conditions be included. (This is not dissimilar to the current government’s industrial relations policy proposals). In this way, awards would become
vehicles for safety net wages and conditions, with actual wages and conditions set by direct bargaining. Again, the effort largely failed. It remains to be seen if the current IR legislation proposals, if enacted, can make non-union bargaining a reality and can convert awards into simple statements of safety net conditions.

Heather Carmody (1993) examines the impact of enterprise bargaining on the development of human resources in industry. She sees the new employee relations agendas as an inevitable consequence of exposing the Australian economy to international competition. Strategically, a committed, co-operative and enterprise focussed workplace is the key to competitiveness. According to Carmody, compulsory arbitration, monopolistic union coverage and centralised wage fixing have historically absolved managers from managing. Human resource/employee relations management has often been reactive and unimaginative, based neither on core business goals, nor on a good understanding of the workforce. She sees enterprise agreements as one of the important steps needed to raise the standards of people management through their creating a framework for:

- encouraging adaptability and openness;
- encouraging and empowering employees to work to their fullest capacities and productivity; and for
- encouraging continuous improvement in the workplace (p. 8).

The September 1995 issue of the *Industrial Relations and Management Letter (IRM)* analyses the 1994 *Annual Report on the Industrial Relations Reform Act* in relation to the content of enterprise agreements and the impact of those agreements on employees. It highlights the lack of communication and understanding between managers
and employees and the need for management to consult and share information more widely.

In the Australian Public Service, 84% of employees are now covered by agency level agreements, while in the Commonwealth Government Business Enterprises, approximately 99% of staff are covered by workplace agreements. *IRM* reports that enterprise bargaining has taken off in large and medium sized companies and examines the quality of these agreements, particularly with regard to increased flexibility, productivity and efficiency. It also examines agreements to see whether they have improved management/employee relations, paying particular attention to communication, trust levels, business knowledge, commitment and accountability.

*The impact of bargaining on employees*

IRM reports on the results of a Workplace Bargaining Survey conducted by the Department of Industrial Relations in October - November of 1994. This was a national survey of both managers and employees conducted at workplaces with 10 or more employees. It confirmed that employees in ‘bargaining workplaces’ were more likely to have experienced greater amounts of change than those from non-bargaining workplaces.

*Are employees better off as a result of bargaining?*

When employees were asked if they better or worse off as a result of enterprise bargaining, the results seemed to be influenced by both the level and type of change introduced, as well as the manner in which changes were implemented. For example,
employees who received a wage increase as part of the change process are more likely to believe they are better off as a result of bargaining. Similarly, employees who had been consulted were much more likely to believe they were better off than those who had not. While access to wage increases and consultation both impacted on employee satisfaction, so too did the quality and quantity of information provided by management. Interestingly, there was no substantial difference in satisfaction with bargaining between employees in workplaces which had increased their average working hours and those with no change (49% compared to 52%). Employees also felt better off if they believed that their opportunities for a career had improved, that their job satisfaction was higher, that they did not feel they had to put more effort into their job, and that co-operation between management and employees and between management and unions had improved over the past 12 months.

**Are employees less secure?**

The Workplace Bargaining Survey found that although employees reported they were performing a wider range of tasks in their jobs and that they were better able to fully utilise their skills, they also perceived that opportunities for career development and promotion had decreased (see Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 below).
### Table 6.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Part VIB workplaces</th>
<th>Non-VIB agreement workplaces</th>
<th>No recent agreement workplaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher (%)</td>
<td>No change (%)</td>
<td>Lower (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of tasks performed in job</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to use skills to full extent</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for promotion &amp; career</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of effort in job</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees’ own productivity</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of stress</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population: All employees in workplaces with 10 or more employees. For Part VIB workplaces, n=2415; non-Part VIB agreement workplaces, n=3740; and no recent agreement workplaces, n=4788.

Source: WBS94 employee questionnaire.
Table 6.4

Change in management and employee relations measures over the previous 12 months, by workplace type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee relations measures</th>
<th>Part VIB workplaces</th>
<th>Non-VIB agreement workplaces</th>
<th>No recent agreement workplaces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher (%)</td>
<td>No change (%)</td>
<td>Lower (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount &amp; quality of information from management</td>
<td>23 53 24</td>
<td>22 52 26</td>
<td>25 54 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say in decisions that affect you</td>
<td>23 57 19</td>
<td>25 54 20</td>
<td>26 57 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation between management &amp; employees</td>
<td>24 49 26</td>
<td>24 41 35</td>
<td>22 50 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation between management &amp; unions</td>
<td>25 54 21</td>
<td>20 54 26</td>
<td>14 61 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with management</td>
<td>14 44 42</td>
<td>17 39 45</td>
<td>20 44 36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Population: All employees in workplaces with 10 or more employees. For Part VIB workplaces, n=2404; non-Part VIB workplaces, n=3715; and no recent agreement workplaces, n=4761.*

*Source: WBS94 employee questionnaire.*

Job security was also seen as a problem by managers. Managers in only 6% of workplaces with enterprise bargaining believed that the agreement had led to an increase in job security of employees, compared with 23% of managers in non-bargaining workplaces. The survey also showed evidence of an increase in work effort and pressure on employees. The majority of workers reported that they were putting more effort into their jobs and that their level of stress had increased. The increased
level of stress was another reason employees claimed dissatisfaction with enterprise bargaining.

In summary, the survey revealed that job satisfaction for employees working to enterprise bargaining agreements had decreased. Significant contributing factors included perceptions of reduced opportunities for employees to use their skills, fewer career opportunities, less job security, reduced information flow and restricted input to decision making. This finding raises the issue of managements being able to successfully engage in a cooperative relationship. This environment is vital if change is to be properly implemented and maintained. Another issue which raised questions about management was the difference in perceptions between managers and employees in relation to job satisfaction (see Table 6.5 below).

**Table 6.5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Increased (%)</th>
<th>Unchanged (%)</th>
<th>Decreased (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee satisfaction</td>
<td>Satisfaction with your job</td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Security of your job</td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Ability to use your skills to their full extent</td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Population:** Employee responses: All employees in Part VIB workplaces with 10 or more employees. Management responses: All part VIB workplaces with 10 or more employees. For employee responses: n=2410; and managers’ responses, n=228. **Source:** WBS94 employee questionnaire and management questionnaire.
Managers were asked about the impact of agreements on employee satisfaction. As the table shows, 58% of managers in agreement workplaces believed that employee satisfaction had increased as a result of the agreements. Their response was at complete variance to that given by employees. Similar discrepancies were highlighted in relation to the issue of job security. The results of this survey indicate that managements still have a lot of work to do in developing greater commitment, better communication and providing a more satisfying work environment.

Staff development

The restructuring of the pertinent awards for both academic library and state library staff in Australia has certainly fuelled a great deal of staff development and training designed to multi-skill library staff. In a tiny number of academic libraries (3) and one state library, the NTRA has impacted via the use of the library industry competency standards for the writing of position descriptions and thus use in training gap analysis and staff development. It should be noted that in the researcher’s workplace, the standards are being used as a framework only. There are areas specific to that enterprise which are not covered by the industry competency standards and which would be ignored at peril. Just as the workplace industrial reforms have moved from a national or state based award to an enterprise level, so, too, do national competency standards need to be supported by enterprise-specific competency requirements in order to be effective.

There is also a greater flexibility with the recognition of prior learning, and, certainly in the researcher’s workplace, highly experienced and competent para-professionals are encouraged to apply for positions which formerly could only have been occupied by
professional librarians (this is also supported under the institution’s award and subsequent enterprise agreement). In this respect, career paths for library technicians have definitely been enhanced. The impact of the competencies being used in the design and delivery of a national curriculum for the preparation of library technicians remains to be seen as this is only the second year of its operation, and to date, there have been no graduates prepared entirely from the new curriculum.

Certainly the funding cuts which have been imposed on universities in 1997 have caused a re-examination of strategic directions. In academic libraries this includes a careful assessment of the nature and type of training and development to be provided, as well as a greater scrutiny of how training and development is integrated and deployed within the library. Managers are seeking a return on their invested training dollar.

Shrinking budgets result in a sharper focus on mission and priorities. As responsibility and authority are devolved, staff who show initiative, and who are flexible, multi-skilled and customer-focused are in greatest demand. Although specialists are still required, the trend to outsource specialist activities, such as cataloguing and classification, has reduced their numbers. More than ever before, libraries are facing stiff competition in their core business areas of information provision, education and recreation. Efforts are being made to analyse and address customer needs in a more systematic way. More attention is being paid to the application of benchmarking, the need to strive for best practice, accurate costings and quality management principles and these all have implications for staff development and training.
Summary

Since the primary data for this study were collected, the awareness of the NTRA and of aspects of workplace rearrangement such as enterprise bargaining has increased dramatically. With awareness, understanding and experience comes a flood of public opinion. The literature has revealed that most commentators see the NTRA as unduly complex and bureaucratic. Tensions between federal and states rights have also hampered the uptake of the training reforms. Lip-service is paid by governments, unions and employers to the principles which underpin the agenda, but the evidence of practical outcomes is lean. The findings of this study have not been unusual in this respect.

As award restructuring gives way to enterprise bargaining, another tension surfaces. This time it centres around what is needed to benefit the enterprise and what is needed to benefit the employees. Unions fight to retain and the rights and enhance the benefits offered by their governing awards to their members. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, this tension is further exacerbated by different perceptions being held by managers and their employees of both benefits and problems with enterprise agreements.

As stated at the outset, both the NTRA and workplace rearrangement were conceived as micro-economic reform mechanisms. Through delivering industry responsive, nationally consistent training, these reforms would enhance Australia’s productivity and improve its ability to compete in a global marketplace, and, at the same time, offer employees a chance to become multi-skilled and better articulated career pathways. The notion on which these reforms were based is that Australia invested far too little in its training compared with other major trading partners. This notion has since been
challenged as has the wisdom of adopting a single, uniform approach to training arrangements by the Australian Government. The situation is aptly summed up by Teece (1997, p. 28) who says:

... the essential picture remains one of a national training system which is not well linked to industrial relations or wage-fixing processes...the overwhelming emphasis on individual enterprises, which is now emerging in Australian industrial relations, calls into question the training reform agenda’s focus on national recognition of competencies and, more broadly, challenges the whole notion of nationally consistent competency standards. ...In practice, national competency standards can only ever be broad guidelines. A needs profile based solely on them can, indeed, become quite unrealistic in real workplaces, unless they are underpinned by detailed, enterprise-specific training policies and procedures.
CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This concluding chapter questions whether the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA) qualifies as a genuine reform, reflects on the impact of federal policy on the NTRA and workplace rearrangement and revisits the four research questions which initiated the study. The impact of workplace rearrangement and the NTRA in the two library sectors, academic and state, is explored. As discussed in Chapter 5, the results of the surveys and interviews indicate that reform, if it has occurred at all, has been minimal. Reflections on the methodology and some thoughts on why the reforms have had so little direct impact are offered. The chapter concludes with recommendations for practice and suggestions for further investigation and research.

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT POLICY AND REFORM

How to recognise a reform

Before addressing the interrelationship between government policy and reform, first it is necessary to define what is meant by the term “reform” and to examine how one determines when reform has occurred. When is a change simply an incremental alteration and when is it a reform? No matter how popular, widely discussed, wise, visionary, bold, or potentially far-reaching in its consequences, unless it becomes
operational, a proposed change is not a reform. Were the concepts embodied in award restructuring and the national training agenda really reforms or merely proposed changes which have failed to take effect? Guthrie and Koppich (1993) define reform, identifying several guidelines. According to Guthrie and Koppich, reform, is accompanied by four major shifts. The first of these shifts is a decision shift.

Decision shifts

Governmental reforms frequently entail a transformation in decision-making power. This can be of three kinds: binary, transactional, or inclusory. In the first instance, decision authority is fixed, for example, local school boards in California once had property-taxing authority, but that has now been removed from them. This is an example of binary decision-making power - it either exists or it does not exist. In a ‘transactional’ shift, decision authority is moved from one office or agency to another. In the case of competency standards, the National Training Board had the authority to approve or reject newly developed industry standards. This body has now been subsumed into the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). The expansion of voting rights illustrates the third category of decision transformations, the inclusory category. Giving women or aborigines the right to vote is to include them in government decision-making. One group does not forego a power completely in order that another has it, simply, decision-making is now more widely shared.
Resource shifts

Reforms frequently involve the distribution or redistribution of resources. In Australia, the coalition party is keen to sell and redistribute assets from previously publicly owned utilities. The labour party sees government retention of such utilities as an investment in the future, as providing security for future generations.

Regulatory shifts or mandates and prohibitions

Government reforms frequently involve regulations demanding that an agency or individuals conduct or cease a particular activity. New rules requiring that schools and universities integrate students with disabilities or that recognition of prior learning be recognised in technical and further education programs are examples.

Value shifts

A government reform will frequently be accompanied or triggered by a shift in value emphasis. Guthrie and Koppich assert that the three value streams which underpin public policy are equality, efficiency and freedom (p.16). These three values shape much of public policy and the debate surrounding it. Periodically, events external to governments, generally demographic, technologic and/or economic in nature, will stimulate the rise of one value stream over the others. Reforms that develop and ultimately take hold, however fleetingly, must respond to some perceived need among a particular segment of society. Sometimes those who desire reform represent a rather narrow, self-contained band of society. At other times, supporters of change reflect a much broader-based, national constituency.
Reform, then, involves the development of a constituency for change. Moreover, this new constituency, which may actually be a coalition of previously-formed constituencies, becomes identified with the reform effort and monitors its implementation. (Guthrie and Koppich, 1993, p. 17).

The Australian economy was once dependent on access to valuable natural resources, and primary industry was its mainstay. The new strategic raw material upon which economic productivity is now crucially dependent, is human capital. Rapid communication, information which is expanding at an exponential rate, and modern organisation are transforming national economies. Nations are now global in their competitive outlook, internationally interdependent, critically dependent on their knowledge capital and insatiable in their quest for technological innovation. Modern manufacturing and service industries demand a workforce capable of making informed decisions. Highly developed human intelligence is increasingly viewed as a nation’s primary economic resource, and Australia is no exception.

It is the human-capital imperative that is driving widespread national education reform efforts in an attempt to expand the supply of human capital so that a nation is capable of technological innovation and modern workforce implementation. Small wonder, then, that the 1980s saw the Australian Government urgently seeking to change the education and award systems to increase the skill base of its workforce and to streamline its work practices so as to enable Australia to compete in a global market.
Does the NTRA qualify as a true reform?

The answer has to be yes if it is examined in light of the above criteria. The NTRA certainly entailed decision shifts. Many of the powers hitherto held by state education agencies were transferred to federal bodies. Indeed, many bodies were created specifically to make these decisions, as, for example, the creation of the National Training Board and the suite of industry training advisory and competency standards bodies. Curricula which had previously been designed by individual state and territory training authorities were now required to meet national requirements and this was the case in the development of a national core curriculum for library technicians.

This shift in decision making has been accompanied by resources shifts, quite significant resources shifts, as witnessed by the establishment and maintenance of the vast and complex network of federal agencies necessary to support and promulgate the initiatives of the NTRA. Regulatory shifts, too, are evidenced by major changes in entry to TAFE courses where prior learning is now recognised. This principle has also influenced award structures where formal qualifications are no longer the only training criterion taken into account when a person applies for a position. Shifts in value are also obvious, although it took some while for politicians and union executives to convince the rank and file and certain sectors of the employer community, of the need to invest heavily in the intellectual knowledge infrastructure of the nation in order to improve its chance of economic growth and viability.

The tripartite agreement of Government, employers and unions (at that time the only feasible way of representing employees) to award restructuring and the development of
industry competency standards and competency-based training was an attempt on the Government’s part to accelerate the acceptance and rate of change. It took some time, however, for the value of the proposed changes to be perceived. Even the well publicised workforce benefits of enhanced skills, greater portability of qualifications and improved career-path structures failed to result in rapid, wide acceptance of the reforms. A prime example of this is the library industry’s cautious uptake of its national industry competency standards, which, at the time of writing, had been in existence for two years.

Impact of federal policy on the National Training Reform Agenda and workplace rearrangement.

Having defined the NTRA as meeting the criteria of a true reform, what then is the impact of government policy? As stated above, over the last 20 years or so, there has been a worldwide shift from nation-state based economies to a more borderless, globally integrated economy. This change has in some ways weakened the salience of the nation-state in policy terms. The impact upon the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) style nations, as described by Cerny (1990), has been a move from the old style Keynesian-style welfare state to a new competitive state. By this he means that the nation-state itself now almost operates as a business or economic player in a less regulated and less state mediated global economy. The consequence for the OECD economies has been the resurgence of an old style economic liberalism which gives priority to the market over state as the chief economic and societal steering mechanism.
Specifically, in Australia and mediated to some degree by a social democratic Labor Party ideology, we have seen a resurgent economic rationalism framing all policy domaines (Pusey, 1991), and a corporate managerialist revolution inside the state itself (Considine, 1988; Yeatman, 1990). The particularly Labor characteristic of this policy settlement in Australia has been the attempt to co-joint the managerialist concern for efficiency and effectiveness with an older Labor agenda about equity. This is reflected in the NTRA as well as in award restructuring. Award restructuring, whilst primarily intended to deliver increased productivity in return for wage rises, nevertheless adopted skilling the workers as the means of achieving these productivity gains. The focus on training and multi-skilling gave rise to considerations such as employers providing clearly identified career paths for employees and the recognition of industry competency standards as an alternative to formal qualifications for career progression, thereby providing greater equity of access to higher levels of work. These training and equity concepts are, of course, at the very heart of the NTRA, with its recognition of prior learning, portability of competency standards across industries and its drive for the development of national curricula which are responsive to industry needs and which lead to formal qualifications which are recognised and accepted nationally. It is not surprising to find both these reforms imbued with the desire to improve efficiency and effectiveness, yet at the same time reflect the traditional Labor value of equity. Award restructuring and the NTRA were designed to complement and reinforce each other.

Whereas the focus of the earlier Labor government under Gough Whitlam (1972-1975) in education was on equality and increasing resources for schooling, the focus under Hawke/Keating was upon outcomes from all levels of education. Education was now
reconceptualised as part of the broader micro-economic reform agenda without any increase in funding. A central intent was to produce a multi-skilled and flexible workforce as part of the non-tarrif protected integration of the Australian economy with the global one. As part of that agenda, a Ministerial Council of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) was created in 1990, and from October 1991, met jointly with the Australian Education Council (AEC). However, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, the very structure of federalism itself and attempts to reconstitute it, together with the changing political complexion of governments at the state level, have mediated the achievement of this agenda.

The replacement of AEC/MOVEET with the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) in 1994 is a consequence of new federalisms at work in education against a backdrop of efforts to revamp federalism generally. During the Hawke/Keating periods, there was an increased ministerialism of policy processes concomitant with these changes. Lingard et al. (1995, pp. 59-60) note that at State and Federal levels, there has been a shift in authority in real terms from the bureaucrats, CEOs and Directors-General of education to Ministers and the political apparatus; and the policy and funding shift from single programs to broadbanding. An example pertinent to this study is federal funding for the development of national industry competency standards and their use in the development and delivery of a national core curriculum for library technicians. Previously, curricula for library technicians were designed in each state and, although the qualification was portable nationally, the content could differ considerably. Despite the resurgence of States’ rights, all States now agree that there is a need for some national collaboration across all levels
of education and even with the recent change to a conservative coalition government, this is unlikely to change.

**Implications of Government Policy and Reform for Staff Development**

As discussed in Chapter 3, staff development policy can be used as an organisational mechanism for continually examining and improving individual and organisational effectiveness, engaging all staff, regardless of career stage, in processes which bring into question organisational values, goals and courses of action. Such an attitude towards staff development would emphasise workplace learning and collaboration, and would be integrated with both operational and strategic planning and decision making. Such policy would allow libraries to better cope with the environment of change and uncertainty as it would provide opportunities to affirm or challenge existing beliefs and practices within the library.

Staff development policy is designed for staff to develop shared understandings of organisational practices, as a precursor to widespread improvement. To be effective, staff development policy should embrace the following propositions:

- learning is a vital element of organisational life as organisations of all kinds face and must cope with environments of unprecedented change;

- libraries, in order to respond to volatile circumstances, should be "learning organisations"; and

- for a learning organisation, both individual and organisational learning are needed - they are interrelated and interdependent.
At the time of the surveys, over half of the libraries in this study had written staff development policies, although there was no evidence to link this with their restructuring status. If, a written staff development policy does reflect the role of learning as one of the key ways to empower an organisation to cope with change, much of which will be externally imposed, it is interesting to note the seeming lack of impact of such momentous changes as embodied in award restructuring and the NTRA. This is of particular interest in libraries surveyed in this study which had staff development policies and where restructuring had occurred. One written policy examined in 1993 from one of these libraries made no reference at all to their award restructure. There was, however, a separate, unrelated document explaining to staff the training they would be required to take as part of the SEP process! Perhaps it is a simple issue of there being a time lag for policy review and update. Furthermore, the results of the surveys and the interviews indicated that the principles embodied in the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) were not reflected in the design and delivery of the staff development programs delivered in-house in either academic or state libraries. Respondents were apparently ignorant of their existence.

The results would suggest that neither the NTRA nor award restructuring have affected the proportions of staff development budgets allocated to librarians and qualified library technicians. The amounts appear to have remained the same. Both of these groups, whether full time, part time or casual, generally have access to training. But there does appear to be more awareness of obtaining value for the money and time invested, and this includes the mode of training used. There is a marked preference for internal as opposed to external training.
In fact, none of the issues given by respondents as being important for staff development in their libraries stemmed directly from external political or environmental changes. As expected, the financial resources and the policies of the parent university or state government organisation, are seen by respondents to be the most important issues which affect the design and delivery of staff development. Once again these issues were the same both in academic and state libraries and those which had restructured and those which had not. The literature would indicate that staff development and training is largely the responsibility of the employer, so that the level of service is maintained and enhanced. A small number of libraries indicated that this was not the view of their parent organisations, but hoped that this would change over time.

Other factors which were seen as important for the design and delivery of staff development and training were the availability of appropriate courses, and also the need for advanced publicity to enable long term planning and budgeting. Respondents also were aware that there needed to be some form of evaluation to ensure that management and staff were not only working towards the same goals and objectives, but that their progress could be monitored. As is evident in the literature, there is a need to adapt to changes and industry requirements, as well as to clients' needs and evolving technologies. Yet, apart from an expressed concern about keeping abreast of the rapid changes wrought by technology in libraries, and the value of multi-skilling and broader career paths for library technicians, there was no mention in the open ended questions of the survey of any potential impact of the issues raised by either the NTRA or award restructuring on staff development and training.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED

At this point it is worth revisiting the research questions and aligning the findings accordingly. Each of the four questions is addressed separately in turn.

**Have the concepts of the Training Guarantee Act (TGA), workplace rearrangement, and the NTRA affected the design, implementation and evaluation of staff development programs in Australian academic and state libraries?**

In order to answer this question, it needs to be broken into its component parts. First, the TGA. Although now in suspension, there is a small amount of evidence to support its having had a favourable effect on some respondent libraries. Although it did not feature as having had a major positive impact from the survey data, the interviewees all appreciated both what it was intended to achieve and its value as a bargaining tool. Some were able to use it as a way of justifying to their funding authorities their decision to increase the proportion of their budgets devoted to staff development. In two instances, libraries had used it to gain larger budget allocations for their training and development programs. One library used the criteria and guidelines for eligible training expenditure which were used to administer the Act as a way of improving its own staff development documentation. Overall, however, it has to be said that the libraries surveyed already had an established practice of staff training and development, and simply desired more resources to support their deeply embedded training cultures.

The second element, workplace rearrangement, (award restructuring and enterprise bargaining) unquestionably has had some effect on staff development and human resources management in the survey libraries. By the time of the second survey in 1993,
22 of the 42 respondent libraries had entered into the award restructuring process. It was evident that multi-skilling was seen as a priority for training programs and along with it, a desire to improve either productivity or benefits for libraries. The recognition in the awards of prior learning through work experience as a legitimate alternative to formal qualifications has opened up hitherto unavailable career path opportunities for library technicians working in state and academic libraries. Provided they meet all other selection criteria, they are finally able to move beyond mid-range in the classification levels without having to gain formal librarianship or related information management qualifications.

Multi-skilling through the SEP, along with the increasing impact of information technology and a fuller appreciation of quality management principles and strategic planning have given many academic and state libraries the opportunity to redesign work and restructure their operations and service delivery. This was true well before the current round of budget cuts took effect. Under many enterprise bargaining agreements in universities and thus in academic libraries, the increasing need for more responsive and flexible structures is recognised, and special procedures agreed by both unions and management are laid down to deal with restructuring processes.

The NTRA is the area of least obvious impact in the library sectors surveyed. It is true to say that knowledge of the NTRA’s key features was scant. There was no evidence of NFROT principles consciously being used in the design of in-house or on-the-job training, nor in any of the written staff development policy documentation examined.
National Library Industry Competency Standards

At the time the surveys were undertaken, the library industry’s national competency standards were in the process of being developed. Some respondents expressed concerns about them and how they might be used. These included the use of competency standards in:

- curriculum design for first award para-professional courses;
- curriculum design for first award professional courses;
- accreditation of first award courses;
- accreditation of professional development courses;
- the establishment of links between industry and course providers;
- program monitoring and evaluation;
- course design for continuing professional development (were they appropriate?);
- identification of appropriate courses for continuing professional development - it was felt that their use might restrict course offerings; and
- assessment - how would they be used? Who would be qualified to assess? Who would pay - the employer? The employee?

The library and information industry has now received its first set of national competency standards. Whether they will be widely adopted by libraries and how they will be applied and assessed remains to be seen. To date, the only evidence of acceptance has been their preliminary use in two public library systems in the state of New South Wales, three academic libraries, one each in the states of Western Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria, and one State Library (Tasmania). The use of the competencies has also been trialled as part of a special project by the Australian Taxation Office
Libraries and the Townsville Office Library is keen to pursue their use further. Nevertheless, uptake has not been rapid.

Although there was widespread knowledge that competency standards were to be developed for the industry, there was very little understanding across the board of what they were, what they were intended to achieve or of how they might be used. Respondents, if they knew anything at all about them, appeared to know of only one or two dimensions of their intended use. Viewed in such a fragmented way, it is not surprising that so many of these people contemplated the arrival of library industry competency standards with concern. As mentioned previously, even now, only three academic libraries and one state library are actively attempting to use the standards as one of their human resources benchmarking tools. The majority of libraries are adopting a “wait and see” approach.

**What do those responsible for staff development in Australian academic and state libraries know/understand of workplace rearrangement, the TGA and the NTRA?**

As has been stated previously, respondents (those responsible for staff development in the survey libraries) were fully aware of the aims and intended outcomes of the TGA and award restructuring. Respondents from workplaces which had not yet restructured their awards were, however, less sure of how this would impact on their staff development, training and career opportunities for their employees. Knowledge of enterprise bargaining was far less common and, in the open ended questions, many respondents confessed not knowing very much about the process and what the
implications for their staff would be. As stated previously, if a further survey were to be undertaken now, undoubtedly the level of knowledge would be far greater.

The area of greatest confusion and lack of understanding was that of the NTRA. Remembering that respondents were, almost exclusively, very senior members of academic or state library staff, this is somewhat surprising. Either the elements of the reform agenda held no relevance for them and thus had been ignored, or the concepts had not yet had time to be promulgated by the national bureaucracy. The complexity of the NTRA (discussed in Chapter 6) has meant that its uptake has been slow outside the TAFE and private training provider circuit. As mentioned above, at the time of the surveys, respondents knew that the industry was to receive national competency standards, but many were highly sceptical of their intended use and impact on libraries and their staff development programs. This was borne out by both survey and interview data. Evidence of knowledge or application of the NFROT was also lacking. When the survey data were analysed by state and by type of library to see whether there were geographic or sectoral differences, this lack of knowledge was equally true of both academic and state library respondents from every state and territory.

*Have the education and training principles of workplace rearrangement and the NTRA been incorporated into staff development programs in Australian academic and state libraries?*

The education and training principles of workplace rearrangement - recognition of prior learning and lifelong learning, greater career path opportunities and multi-skilling had all been embraced by those libraries which had restructured. Even those that had not
restructured, had a well developed training and development culture and were keen to multi-skill their staff. Staff development programs were designed specifically to deliver greater productivity through multi-skilling and new work practices. The surveys also showed a greater reliance on internal (on-the-job and in-house) training as opposed to external training. This had not been the case previously. Furthermore, as training became an essential, rather than a desirable aspect of multi-skilling employees, those responsible for organising training expressed a desire for higher quality programs with carefully planned outcomes. This, too, was in line with the aims of award restructuring. As mentioned above, since enterprise bargaining has begun to supersede award restructuring, there is also recent evidence to suggest that training will be a mandatory part of any work restructuring. This is certainly the case under one of the Schedules of the enterprise agreement in researcher’s University.

As for the NTRA with its competency standards, competency-based training and the national framework for the recognition of training (NFROT), the libraries surveyed were not incorporating these into their staff development programs. Despite the fact that at the time of the surveys, the library industry competency standards were not yet developed, there were relevant cross industry standards already in use in other industries/professions (such as competencies for trainers and assessors, health and safety competency standards and a range of administration/management competency standards). There was no evidence that these were to be considered for possible adoption by the respondent libraries. Even now, with the national library competency standards in place, acceptance is slow. The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) has developed a series of self-paced learning packages designed to
inform library employees about the industry’s competency standards and their range of applications. It has been actively promoting their use along with NFROT and competency-based training for the design and delivery of continuing professional development courses. Whilst acknowledging that workplace training is wholly within the jurisdiction of the employer, one could extrapolate from this that the professional association also would encourage and support the adoption of these approaches for staff development programs in individual libraries.

Regardless of whether award restructuring has been implemented, libraries appear to be increasingly aware of the actual and potential implications of award restructuring and other industrial changes such as enterprise bargaining and competency standards on their staff development and training programs. In general, libraries surveyed in 1993 appeared to be more optimistic about future directions than they had been in 1992.

*What do those responsible for staff development in Australian state and academic libraries understand the term “staff development” to mean?*

The seven interviewees were asked to state what they understood the term “staff development” to mean. A phenomenological analysis revealed that even such a small sample yielded a rich variety of conceptions. No less than twelve pools of meaning were identified as discussed in Chapter 5. These were analysed to reveal seven different conceptions of staff development. The essential differences among these conceptions reflected the following categories: training, career development, human resources management, financial resources management, legislation, motivation and curriculum evaluation.
Beginning with the human resources context of staff development, two interviewees were concerned that the increasing use of contract, part time and casual staff in libraries would have a detrimental effect on career development and succession planning.

“We don’t, as an organisation, have an approach to succession planning. It’s fairly ad hoc and we do have difficulty, I think, identifying people who we think should be given that extra grooming to provide them with the skills for later promotion. It’s not necessarily a lack of commitment or wish to do that. One of the problems lies in the nature of the environment we operate in. The pool of people we have to promote has become considerably reduced and the very nature of a redundancy program means that your better people tend to leave”.

This was the view of one person. This was reinforced and added to by another who said,

“...we are increasingly using part time staff and those people often have no particular wish to work full time in order to gain promotion and they aren’t in the pool of promotable people, so, this again narrows our options.”

As far as achieving effective organisational outcomes, interviewees said,

“[Staff development is] providing staff with appropriate training opportunities which will enable them both to function more effectively in their current role and also to provide them with a training base for future career development.”

“Training I see as being mainly job related and analysing what skills one needs to do a specific job and on this basis building up the training needs.”

And on management responsibilities and the strategic planning context:

“I see staff development as one of our major management strategies so I put it right up there with working out staffing for the library and the budget because it is integral to those activities. It’s a way to mesh what we know about the staff with the staff
profile we wish to develop and as part of that process we start to look at what goals we set for the library for the coming year, what programs, services, activities we need to achieve those goals, what people we need, and then we look at what people we've got.”

“We are at the cross roads at the moment and are re-examining the training dollar. The thinking ... is to link training with corporate plans.”

These are some excerpts to illustrate the range and complexity of understandings of the term “staff development”. Full transcripts from the interviews are provided in Appendix Three.

**IMPACT OF WORKPLACE REARRANGEMENT AND THE NTRA ON STATE AND ACADEMIC LIBRARIES**

Although at the time of the surveys about half of Australia’s academic and state libraries had undergone award restructuring, these two surveys revealed very few changes in staff development and training policies and programs. For every library which reported a particular change there seemed to be one reporting the opposite. Those improvements which have occurred, seem just as likely to be related to modern management practices such as improved strategic planning processes or adoption and deployment of quality management principles, improved communication or more democratic organisational structures as to the implementation of award restructuring.

The positive responses to questions about multi-skilling and productivity suggest that these aspects of the SEP are widely seen as beneficial to libraries, but the movement toward skills-related career paths, competency standards and enterprise bargaining are less warmly welcomed. The literature would seem to indicate that these are the
directions towards which the industry is moving, particularly with regard to enterprise bargaining. In theory, this could prove to be beneficial to a professional group, whose multitude of abilities, skills, expertise and knowledge have been undervalued in the workplace. Ideally, enterprise bargaining should be about mutually beneficial outcomes to both employees and employers and the wider community, but as revealed in Chapter 6, managements need to align their perceptions with those of their employees and to improve workplace relationships in order that mutual benefits can be fully recognised.

The underlying tone of the 1992 and 1993 survey responses revealed much about the attitudes and reactions of individual respondents to recent industrial and management changes. These included cynicism about institutional motives in implementing award restructuring, enthusiasm for the perceived future benefits, doubt about the likelihood of achieving beneficial change and seeing the process as another bureaucratic interference which would divert attention from the real issues of providing a quality library service.

Many libraries found the award restructuring process long and arduous. But opinions varied as to its worth. Some saw few positive outcomes for staff or the library, reporting loss of morale and forecasting reduced salaries, conditions and career opportunities. Others saw far reaching long- and short-term benefits in improved career paths, more interesting work and more flexibility for staff, as well as improved efficiency and productivity through multi-skilling. It is likely that the experience of each institution depends largely on the actual local outcomes of the restructuring process, which in turn are affected by that institution’s established philosophies and management practices as well as the local state of industrial relations.
The failure of the NTRA to have impacted on the respondent libraries at the time of the surveys is of particular interest. It meets all the criteria of a national reform, yet it appeared to be quite separate and external to Australian state and academic libraries. Guthrie and Koppich (1993) present a tripartite paradigm of reform. Their model specifies that reform is crucially contingent upon the presence of three preconditions: alignment, initiative and mobilisation (AIM). Components of the reform paradigm, they argue, alert us to the broader patterns and dynamics of policy emergence and influence. A reform is unlikely to occur unless the value stream with which a prospective reform is most closely aligned is dominant or ascending, or a society (or in this case, profession) must be in a period of substantial uncertainty regarding its value preferences.

In the case of academic and state libraries and the NTRA, neither of these conditions pertained. The three strongly preferred values that significantly influence public policy as posited by Guthrie and Koppich are equality, efficiency and liberty. These values are viewed by the public in democratic societies as conditions that government should maximise.

Liberty connotes freedom of choice. Equality signifies parity of opportunity, outcome or treatment. Proponents of efficiency strive for tools and techniques capable of producing greater output. Whereas citizens may hold these values in common in the abstract, practical expressions may provoke conflict (p. 20).

Despite the popular appeal of these values as abstract goals, their simultaneous fulfilment in reality verges on the impossible. Exclusive pursuit of one obviates fulfilment of another.
The dominant value underpinning the NTRA was said to be equality. Respondent libraries, however, perceived the dominant value to be efficiency: the need to improve the skills, flexibility and productivity of the workforce to improve Australia’s global competitiveness. If the government’s marketing of the NTRA as being a mechanism based first and foremost on equality had been successful, it may well have been adopted far more quickly in libraries. The dichotomy between values espoused and values perceived led libraries to be cautious, if not suspicious of the intended outcomes of this reform. The phenomenological analysis of staff development revealed that respondents were far more concerned with outcomes which reflected liberty and equality than efficiency (see Chapter 5). Neither was the second of Guthrie and Koppich’s conditions for a reform to occur in place at the time, namely, a society (or profession) being in a period of substantial uncertainty regarding its value preferences. Although the libraries surveyed in 1992 and 1993 had experienced periods of considerable upheaval, their dominant values were stable and clear.

Koppich and Guthrie’s other two preconditions for reform, initiative and mobilisation, are also worth considering in the context of the NTRA. If unsettling or threatening conditions persist or are perceived as sufficiently dangerous, alterations in public moods create a disposition toward policy action. The main sources of such value uncertainty or popular distress in today’s climate are economic. At the time of the surveys, the respondent libraries, while expressing concerns over financial resources, had not experienced the enormous budget cutbacks yet to come. In a period of relatively stable income, they were disinclined to place efficiency above equality.
Along with alignment and initiative, intentionality is the third critical condition for reform. Some individual or group must mobilise existing resources to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the reform. As Guthrie and Koppich say, “...reform begs for ‘policy entrepreneurs’.” (p. 24). These are people who want reform; they are advocates for change. When problems, policies and politics join and present opportunities for action, then the ‘policy entrepreneurs’ will be ready to mobilise resources to promote their solution or favoured alternative. Although the Australian Library and Information Association openly supported the thrust of the NTRA, actively participating in the development of industry competency standards and incorporating NFROT principles into its policy statements on continuing professional education for its members, there was no incentive or mobilising force at enterprise level at the time. Simply, libraries saw no benefit to them in adopting the changes embodied in the reform at the time. Thus, in light of the Guthrie and Koppich model, it is hardly surprising the NTRA had so little impact as none of the three conditions for reform were evidenced in the respondent libraries at the time.

**REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY**

Whilst in 1992 and 1993 the phenomena of award restructuring, enterprise bargaining and the NTRA were all widely discussed in the literature, and indeed, by 1993, 22 of the 42 libraries surveyed had undergone or commenced award restructuring, the researcher had little idea of the significance and scale of the changes which were to occur in the workplace. The research was not constructed with reform in mind. As stated in Chapters 1 and 4, the original investigation was to ascertain the impact, if any,
of the *Training Guarantee Act* on academic libraries in the state of Victoria. Even when the scope of the research broadened, job redesign was not part of the conceptual framework. Six years later, it is hard to understand how it could have been omitted. Indeed, the magnitude of the changes, including the alignment of both liberal and labour state governments to accept generic competencies as outcomes of state secondary education curricula, was never envisaged. As the changes unfolded, it was felt necessary to examine the NTRA and workplace rearrangement to see if they could actually be defined as reforms, hence the discussion of “what constitutes a reform” at the beginning of this chapter.

The methodology, whilst perfectly adequate for gathering both qualitative and quantitative data for a closely defined research topic, failed to embrace the magnitude of what eventually emerged in these national social and political reforms. The intensive analysis of these reforms as reflected in the literature became increasingly important as time progressed. As discussed earlier, these reforms were accompanied by resource shifts of a magnitude that never could have been envisaged at the outset of this research. The NTRA and the outcomes of workplace reform became increasingly pervasive across the country, eventually leading to entirely new legislation in this area with the coming to office of a conservative federal government. It was this policy analysis as reflected in the literature that gave context, depth and insight into what was not happening in academic and state libraries in Australia.

The data from this study reveal a surprising lack of differences in the impact of microeconomic reforms between the two library sectors investigated. Surprising, in that at the time of the preliminary study in 1991, it appeared that state libraries, closely
governed as they are by their state government bureaucracies, were poised to embrace federal workplace and training reforms, especially in those states where the state government in office was the same as the federal government. This “readiness” was not evident in academic libraries. It was due to expected different rates of impact between the two sectors that state libraries were included in the present study.

Geographic differences were also anticipated. This assumption, which also proved to be false, was based on the differences between federal and state political parties and their respective ideologies. It was mistakenly thought that the uptake of the federal government’s reforms would be quicker in states of the same political allegiances. (See Table 5.15 in Chapter 5).

**CHALLENGES FOR LIBRARY MANAGERS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE**

In times of shrinking budgets, the challenge for library managers is to design flexible work structures and processes and devise staff development programs which enable greater skilling and enhance the attainment of the library's strategic goals whilst at the same time providing for the development of individuals in the workplace and avoiding a breach of the work requirements of the various industry awards/enterprise agreements. Perhaps this task will be easier if competency standards for the industry are embraced.

At least their adoption can ensure that managers employ a common language to describe required skills, knowledge and outcomes of work at recognised levels across the industry.

In the meantime, those responsible for the design of staff development in libraries must adopt a position of creative diplomacy in order to multi-skill their staff without
compromising work standards, for example, by weakening the role of the specialist to such an extent that specific core services can no longer be offered. Clearly defined strategic directions based on a clear knowledge of customer needs, service priorities, performance appraisal processes and the application of quality management principles to work practices, along with the strong pursuit and integration of customer feedback, can provide a useful platform for responsive staff development design. Furthermore, staff development managers will have to be more flexible in designing career opportunities which remove barriers to staff moving progressively through a classification structure. What is the point if the only career structure open to library technicians is to qualify as a librarian? They should not have to change their emphasis in order to gain promotion, provided their skills base is appropriate to the requirements of the position. Similarly, not all librarians want, or are suited to management positions. In any case, as flatter organisational structures replace more hierarchical ones, there will be fewer management positions for library technicians and librarians to take. There need to be alternative career paths for professional and technical specialists to take that encourage them to remain within their areas of expertise. To be attractive, these alternatives will either need to pay well, provide more job satisfaction, or both. This may also involve changing the way library staff view their careers and their value to the organisation. This, too, has implications for staff development.

One could argue that workplace rearrangement and the NTRA have little to offer here. However, at the enterprise level, achievement of operational and strategic plans relies on well conceived staff development programs. The education and training philosophy underpinning the structural efficiency principle and the National Training Reform Agenda
could usefully inform the design, implementation and evaluation of training programs for all library staff.

Employers, employees, registered providers, tertiary institutions and professional associations can all play a role in determining library staff development training needs. Partnerships among these providers can ensure the design and delivery of quality training and development products. Some examples are as follows:

- The focus in the national training reform agenda on workplace training has implications for the quality of our training and assessment procedures. Industry competency standards have been developed to use as benchmarks. There are, however, separately developed competency standards for workplace trainers and assessors. Whether libraries will adopt these and how they might be used is yet to be determined.

- Staff development programs should not only be of high standard vis a vis their content, relevance, delivery etc., but should also consider embracing the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) principles as well as adult learning theory.

ALIA, the Australian Library and Information Association, has professional development as one of its major priorities in its strategic plan. Apart from provision of training packages which may also be useful for staff development, it has negotiated with the Library Association (UK) to modify its Framework (for continuing professional development) to meet the NFROT principles for its use in Australia. ALIA is also looking to incorporate NFROT principles into all its new professional development and training activities. (See ALIA’s statement, Underlying Principles for Continuing

ALIA is also keen to develop strategic partnerships with relevant course providers, for example, the Australian Information Management Association, to deliver quality training programs which comply with NFROT principles. The more input received from outside sources in the design and delivery of staff development programs in state and academic libraries, the more likely they are to incorporate and deploy the major principles of the NTRA and this includes a conscious use of NFROT principles in their in-house training delivery.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY/INVESTIGATION.**

This study has raised more questions than provided answers. In part, this is because the data were collected when the training and industrial reforms were in their infancy. In part, the questions arise because the policies intended to deliver these reforms have failed to impact significantly outside the TAFE and private training provider sectors. Despite the intent by Government, employers have failed to have substantial influence on training outcomes and the tensions between federal and states’ rights have resulted in a slower than expected development of infrastructure to promulgate change. The following are suggestions for further study which might help to provide some of the answers to the questions raised by this study.

The first, and perhaps most obvious suggestion is to repeat the 1993 questionnaire used in this study. The passage of four years would establish whether respondents’ levels of knowledge and understanding of industrial and training reforms had changed, and if so,
to what degree. Economic exigencies, too may have influenced dominant values and created a different willingness to adopt the changes embodied in workplace rearrangement and the NTRA.

The second suggestion is to conduct an investigation into the impact of enterprise bargaining upon the working conditions and the self esteem of library staff. Have career paths been enhanced? Has enterprise bargaining been mutually beneficial to both staff and employer?

The third suggestion is to analyse multi-skilling and its benefits for academic and state library staff. What advantages and disadvantages have been experienced? For staff? For their clients?

The fourth suggestion is to conduct a survey in two year’s time of academic and state libraries to determine the rate of uptake of national industry standards and to examine the development of enterprise competency standards.

The fifth suggestion is to study the impact of the new industrial legislation with its emphasis on direct negotiation between employers and employees (thereby downplaying the role of the trade unions) on staff development and training outcomes in academic and state libraries.

The final suggestion is to examine the change from a labor to a liberal government on training and industrial reform policies and any subsequent impact on the design, implementation and evaluation of staff development programs in academic and state libraries.
**Concluding Comments**

The complex bureaucratic nature of the reforms examined in this study have resulted in a slow adoption rate for many of the changes they seek to promulgate. As discussed in Chapter 6, this is true of industries other than the library and information industry. The slow acceptance of the reforms is due, in part, to the complex interplay of states versus federal powers, union versus government authority, a changing industrial relations climate and a misalignment of values. The new *Workplace Relations Act, 1996* gives priority to helping workers balance their work and family responsibilities, rather than focussing on employers providing skills-based career path opportunities. The Act’s objectives seek a more direct and productive relationship between employers and their employees, with greater flexibility and choice in making formal agreements. The negotiation of formal non-union agreements (Australian Workplace Agreements) and individual contracts has been simplified and is encouraged. One might ask whether in this new industrial context, the wide-spread reforms encompassed by award restructuring and the NTRA might ever take firm root.

What implications will these reforms to the Australian industrial relations system, together with recent developments in technology and changes in the economic climate, have for staff development and training in academic libraries? From this study, it appears that it is too early to tell. Major impact of anything other than career broadbanding and multi-skilling as a result of award restructuring remains unclear. This may be because the library and information industry has always valued staff training and development highly. Or it may be because the full extent of the reforms have not yet been realised. Or they may be deemed irrelevant. If the national library and information industry competency
standards, developed as a result of the NTRA, are adopted, we may see much more attention being paid to competency-based training and NFROT principles in staff development design and implementation and evaluation.

In a sense, one could argue that the education and training reforms failed to impact because Australian academic and state libraries were way ahead of the manufacturing and other blue collar sectors of industry which the reforms were intended to revolutionise. Given that they already had well developed training and development cultures, the adoption of quality management principles with their emphasis on process improvement, elimination of duplication and waste, and valuing both employees and customers, has been far more relevant to libraries achieving greater productivity.

Industry is now realising the importance of knowledge management. Libraries have always traded on their human capital or their knowledge capital. Training and development have been essential elements of this management approach. The reforms were, it seems, intended to impact most on industries where this was not the norm. Their principles were, to some extent, ‘old hat’ to libraries. In this sense, it is hardly surprising that there is so little evidence of the reforms having had major impact in the library sectors surveyed.

Nevertheless, whilst the interrelated concepts of multi-skilling and staff development have long been embraced by library managers and their employees alike, the breakdown of barriers between the career progressions of professional librarians and library technicians is, in many cases, directly attributable to award restructuring. And, far from the reforms having little to offer libraries, the judicious use of NFROT principles and industry and cross industry competency standards, could improve the calibre of
both in-house and external staff development program design, delivery and evaluation.

This emphasis on continuous improvement would, after all, be in the spirit of quality management. Whether these reforms will ever be adopted, only time and further investigation will tell.
APPENDIX 1
RESEARCH STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF AWARD RESTRUCTURING ON STAFF DEVELOPMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE
Glossary of Terms

Competency based training involves the development of training programs which are designed to ensure that individuals acquire specified skills.

Multi-skilling involves the acquisition of additional skills, in the library environment may be of four types:

* technical - varying of work to increase skills, e.g. the redesign of dedicated keyboard positions to include a range of other duties;

* functional - eliminating over specialisation in jobs, e.g. the work of the specialist government publications librarian being done by a general reference librarian;

* vertical - devolving tasks or decision making authority and managerial/supervisory and budgetary responsibility to lower levels;

* horizontal - extending the range of skills across functionally and/or organisationally distinct areas at the classification, e.g. a reference librarian learning to be a cataloguer.

Skills Audit is a systematic analysis of existing skills and competencies. It identifies gaps and allows for accurate assessment of those skills and competencies required in the future.

Structural Efficiency Principle includes, but is not limited to:

* establishing skill-related career paths which provide an incentive for workers to continue to participate in skill formation;

* eliminating impediments to multi-skilling and broadening the range of tasks which a worker may be required to perform;

* creating appropriate relativities between different categories of workers within the award and at enterprise level;

* ensuring that working patterns and arrangements enhance flexibility and the efficiency of the industry;

* including properly fixed minimum rates for classification in awards, related approximately to one another, with any amounts in excess of these properly fixed minimum rates being expressed as supplementary payments;

* updating and/or rationalising the list of respondents to awards;

* addressing any cases where award provisions discriminate against sections of the workforce.
SECTION 1 - DEMOGRAPHY

1. Name of library or campus:-

2. Name of respondent.

3. Number of librarians employed:

4. Number of library technicians employed

* For academic libraries only

5. Number of students enrolled

SECTION 2 - GENERAL TRAINING

Please answer the following questions by ticking the appropriate box(es).

6. Does your library have its own written staff development policy/program?

   YES □
   NO □

7. What percentage of the last financial year’s total training budget was allocated to the training of library technicians?

   0-25% □
   26-50% □
   51-75% □
   over 76% □
8. What percentage of the last financial year's total training budget was allocated to the training of librarians?

- 0-25% □
- 26-50% □
- 51-75% □
- over 76% □

9. What percentage of total training activities were attended by library technicians over the last financial year?

- 0-25% □
- 26-50% □
- 51-75% □
- over 76% □

10. What percentage of total training activities were attended by librarians over the last financial year?

- 0-25% □
- 26-50% □
- 51-75% □
- over 76% □

11. Is any training currently accessible to the following staff:-
    (Tick as many boxes as appropriate)

   - PART-TIME □
   - CASUAL □
12. Is training conducted:—
   (Tick as many boxes as appropriate)
   
   ON-THE-JOB □
   IN-HOUSE SESSIONS □
   EXTERNALLY □

13. Which training delivery mode, if any, is most common?

14. Does training take place in:—
   
   WORK TIME □
   STAFF’S OWN TIME □
   BOTH □

15. Has award restructuring been implemented at your library?
   
   YES □
   NO □

   If you answered NO, please go to question 17.

16. Has award restructuring affected your staff development policy/program in any of the areas mentioned in questions 7-14?
   
   YES □
   NO □

   If you answered NO, please go to question 19

17. Do you envisage that award restructuring will affect your staff development policy/program in the areas mentioned in questions 7-14 in the future?
   
   YES □
   NO □

   If you answered NO, please go to question 20.
18. In which areas, if any, have changes already been made?

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19. In which areas do you envisage that changes will be made in the future?

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<td>STAFF'S OWN TIME</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of training:</th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ON-THE-JOB</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IN-HOUSE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTERNAL</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 3 - SKILL DEVELOPMENT

20. Do you think that the skill levels prescribed in the award(s) pertinent to your library emphasise:

   FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS RATHER THAN EXPERIENCE □  
   EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS □  
   NEITHER □  

21. Does your staff development policy/program encourage experienced staff to gain the formal qualifications necessary for career progression?

   YES □  
   NO □  

22. Does your staff development policy/program support staff in gaining these qualifications? (e.g. time off to attend courses, payment of fees)

   YES □  
   NO □  

23. Does your staff development policy/program allow for retraining of staff to meet any changes in skills required under award restructuring?

   NOT AT ALL □  
   TO SOME EXTENT □  
   TO A LARGE EXTENT □  

24. When will library technicians and librarians be considered for reclassification at a higher level within the organisation?

   WHEN APPROPRIATE SKILL LEVEL IS REACHED □  
   WHEN A POSITION AT A HIGHER LEVEL BECOMES VACANT □  
   BOTH □  
   OTHER □  

If OTHER, please specify: ____________________________________________  

__________________________________________
25. Do you see the Structural Efficiency Principle as a means of facilitating change in the way staff development is:-
   (Tick as many boxes as appropriate)
   
   CONCEIVED □
   PLANNED □
   IMPLEMENTED □
   
   Please comment:-
   
   _______________________________________________________
   
   _______________________________________________________
   
   _______________________________________________________
   

26. Has the library conducted a skills audit?
   
   YES □
   NO □
   

27. Do you think that multi-skilling as presented in the Structural Efficiency Principle can:-
   (Tick as many boxes as appropriate - you may wish to refer to the glossary)
   
   □ Increase staff capacity for innovation?
   
   □ Have a positive impact on job security?
   
   □ Have a positive impact on career prospects?
   
   □ Increase employee satisfaction through greater variety of tasks?
   
   □ Lessen demarcation between tasks?
   
   □ Allow employers and employees greater capacity to adapt to the pressures of new technology?
   
   □ Increase the scope of individual initiative through participation in goal setting?
28. In which of the following areas, if any, is multi-skilling encouraged in your library?
   (Tick as many boxes as appropriate - you may wish to refer to the glossary)

   VERTICAL □
   HORIZONTAL □
   TECHNICAL □
   FUNCTIONAL □

29. What effect do you think multi-skilling has on productivity in libraries?

   POSITIVE EFFECT □
   NEGATIVE EFFECT □
   NO EFFECT □

   Please comment: ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

30. Do you see the proposed development of Australia-wide library competency standards as having an effect on staff development?

   YES □
   NO □

   If YES, in what way: _________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
SECTION 4 - GENERAL ISSUES

31. Increased productivity is one of the principles underpinning award restructuring. Has this concept of productivity been interpreted by your library as being:

QUANTITATIVE ☐
QUALITATIVE ☐
BOTH ☐

32. Has this concept of productivity affected your approach to staff development?

YES ☐
NO ☐
NOT YET ☐

If YES, in what way: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

* If award restructuring has already been implemented, please answer questions 33-35. If not, please go to question 36.

33. How do you believe your library staff have been affected by award restructuring:

ADVANTAGED ☐
DISADVANTAGED ☐
NEITHER ☐

Please comment: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
34. Do you think that career path opportunities for library technicians have been improved under the new award?

YES □

NO □

If YES, in what way:

________________________________________

________________________________________

35. Do you think that career path opportunities for librarians have been improved under the new award?

YES □

NO □

If YES, in what way:

________________________________________

________________________________________

* Please go to question 39.

36. How do you believe your library staff will be affected by award restructuring:

ADVANTAGED □

DISADVANTAGED □

NEITHER □

Please comment:

________________________________________

________________________________________

37. Do you think that career path opportunities for library technicians will be improved under the new award?

YES □

NO □

If YES, in what way:

________________________________________

________________________________________
38. Do you think that career path opportunities for librarians will be improved new award?

YES □

NO □

If YES, in what way:

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

39. Do you feel that enterprise bargaining within your institution will be beneficial to your staff?

YES □

NO □

If YES, in what way:

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

40. Has the Training Guarantee Act had any impact on staff development in your library?

YES □

NO □

If YES, in what way:

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

41. Apart from award restructuring, what other issues are important for the design and delivery of staff development in your library? (e.g. amalgamations, reduced budgets)

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Thank you for your time and patience in answering this questionnaire.
RESEARCH STUDY ON THE IMPACT
OF AWARD RESTRUCTURING ON
STAFF DEVELOPMENT

FOLLOW-UP

QUESTIONNAIRE
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Multi-skilling involves the acquisition of additional skills. In the library environment it may be one of four types:

* technical varying of work to increase skills, e.g. the redesign of dedicated keyboard positions to include a range of other duties;

* functional eliminating over-specialisation in jobs, e.g. the work of the specialist government publications librarian being done by a general reference librarian;

* vertical devolving tasks or decision-making authority and managerial/supervisory and budgetary responsibility to lower levels;

* horizontal extending the range of skills across functionally and/or organisationally distinct areas at the classification, e.g. a reference librarian trained to be a cataloguer.

Skills Audit is a systematic analysis of existing skills and competencies. It identifies gaps and allows for accurate assessment of those skills and competencies required in the future.

Award Restructuring / Structural Efficiency Principle includes, but is not limited to:

* establishing skills'-related career paths which provide an incentive for workers to continue to participate in skills' formation;

* eliminating impediments to multi-skilling and broadening the range of tasks which a worker may be required to perform;

* creating appropriate relativities between different categories of workers within the award and at enterprise level;

* ensuring that working patterns and arrangements enhance flexibility and the efficiency of the industry;

* including properly fixed minimum rates for classification in awards, related approximately to one another, with any amounts in excess of these properly fixed minimum rates being expressed as supplementary payments;

* updating and/or rationalising the list of respondents to federal awards;

* addressing any cases where award provisions discriminate against sections of the workforce.
SECTION 1 - DEMOGRAPHY

1. Name of library or campus:-

______________________________________________________________________

2. a. Name of respondent.______________________________________________________________________

b. Position held._____________________________________________________________________________

c. Staff development experience and/or qualifications.___________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

3. Total number of staff (EFT).

4. a. Number of qualified library technicians employed (EFT )

   __________

b. Number of librarians employed (EFT)

   __________

5. Total number of students enrolled (ACADEMIC LIBRARIES ONLY).

   __________

SECTION 2 - GENERAL TRAINING

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY TICKING THE APPROPRIATE BOXES.

6. Does your library have its own written staff development policy/program?

   YES  □1

   NO   □2

7. What percentage of the last financial year's total training budget was allocated to the training of qualified library technicians?

   0-25%  □1

   26-50% □2

   51-75% □3

   over 76% □4
8. What percentage of the last financial year's total training budget was allocated to the training of librarians?

- 0-25% □  
- 26-50% □  
- 51-75% □  
- over 76% □  

9. What percentage of total training activities were attended by qualified library technicians over the last financial year?

- 0-25% □  
- 26-50% □  
- 51-75% □  
- over 76% □  

10. What percentage of total training activities were attended by librarians over the last financial year?

- 0-25% □  
- 26-50% □  
- 51-75% □  
- over 76% □  

11. Is any training currently accessible to the following staff?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PART-TIME QUALIFIED LIBRARY TECHNICIAN</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASUAL QUALIFIED LIBRARY TECHNICIANS</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART-TIME LIBRARIANS</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASUAL LIBRARIANS</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Is training conducted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ON THE JOB</td>
<td>☐₁</td>
<td>☐₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN-HOUSE SESSIONS</td>
<td>☐₁</td>
<td>☐₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXTERNAL TO THE LIBRARY</td>
<td>☐₁</td>
<td>☐₂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Which of the above training delivery modes, if any, is most common? (one only)

a. Qualified Library Technicians ________________________________

b. Librarians ________________________________

14. Does training take place in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WORK TIME</td>
<td>☐₁</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAFF'S OWN TIME</td>
<td>☐₂</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOTH</td>
<td>☐₃</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Has award restructuring been implemented at your library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐₁</td>
<td>☐₂</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

16. Has award restructuring affected your staff development policy/program in any of the areas mentioned in questions 7 - 14?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐₁</td>
<td>☐₂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. In which areas, if any, have changes already been made?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>No Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRAINING BUDGET ALLOCATION:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified Library Technicians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- full-time</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- part-time</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- casual</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- full-time</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- part-time</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- casual</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRAINING ATTENDANCE:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified Library Technicians</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- casual</td>
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<td>□ 2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians</td>
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<tr>
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<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- casual</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AMOUNT OF TRAINING:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-house</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External to the library</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work time</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff's own time</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QUALITY OF TRAINING:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External to the library</td>
<td>□ 1</td>
<td>□ 2</td>
<td>□ 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. Do you envisage that award restructuring will affect your staff development policy/program in the areas mentioned in questions 7 - 14 in the future?

YES □ → Q.19

NO □ → Q.20

19. In which areas do you envisage that changes could be made in the future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>No Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**TRAINING BUDGET ALLOCATION:-**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualified Library Technicians</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Librarians</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>- part-time</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TRAINING ATTENDANCE:-**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualified Library Technicians</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- casual</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AMOUNT OF TRAINING:-**

| On-the-job                  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| In-house                    | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| External to the library     | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Work time                   | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Staff's own time            | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**QUALITY OF TRAINING:-**

| On-the-job                  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| In-house                    | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| External to the library     | 1 | 2 | 3 |
SECTION 3 - SKILL DEVELOPMENT

20. Do the skill levels prescribed in the current award(s) pertinent to your library emphasise

FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS RATHER THAN EXPERIENCE  □ 1
EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS □ 2
NEITHER □ 3
BOTH □ 4

21. Does your staff development policy/program encourage experienced staff to gain the formal qualifications necessary for career progression?

YES □ 1
NO □ 2→23

22. Does your staff development policy/program support staff in gaining these qualifications? (e.g. time off to attend courses, payment of fees)

YES □ 1
NO □ 2

23. Does your staff development policy/program allow for retraining of staff to meet any changes in skills required under award restructuring?

NOT AT ALL □ 1
TO SOME EXTENT □ 2
TO A LARGE EXTENT □ 3

24. When will qualified library technicians and librarians be considered for reclassification at a higher level within the organisation?

WHEN APPROPRIATE SKILL LEVEL IS REACHED □ 1
WHEN A POSITION AT A HIGHER LEVEL BECOMES VACANT □ 2
BOTH □ 3
OTHER □ 4

If OTHER, please specify:__________________________________________
25. Does the Structural Efficiency Principle facilitate change in the way staff development is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONCEIVED</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLANNED</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPLEMENTED</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please comment:


26. Has the library conducted a skills audit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Do you think that multi-skilling as presented in the Structural Efficiency Principle can:-
(You may wish to refer to the glossary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>UNSURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase staff capacity for innovation?</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
<td>□₃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a positive impact on job security?</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
<td>□₃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a positive impact on career prospects?</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
<td>□₃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase employee satisfaction through greater variety of tasks?</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessen demarcation between tasks?</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
<td>□₃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow employers and employees greater capacity to adapt to the pressures of new technology?</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
<td>□₃</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the scope of individual initiative through participation in goal setting?</td>
<td>□₁</td>
<td>□₂</td>
<td>□₃</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If OTHER, please comment


28. In which of the following areas, if any, is multi-skilling encouraged in your library? (You may wish to refer to the glossary)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VERTICAL ☐₁ ☐₂</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORIZONTAL ☐₁ ☐₂</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TECHNICAL ☐₁ ☐₂</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNCTIONAL ☐₁ ☐₂</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. What effect do you think multi-skilling has on productivity in libraries?

OVERALL POSITIVE EFFECT ☐₁
OVERALL NEGATIVE EFFECT ☐₂
NO EFFECT ☐₃

Please comment:____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

30. Do you see the proposed development of Australia-wide library competency standards as having an effect on staff development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐₁</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please comment:____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
SECTION 4 - GENERAL ISSUES

31. Increased productivity is one of the principles underpinning award restructuring. Has this concept of productivity been interpreted by your library as being:

   QUANTITATIVE □
   QUALITATIVE □
   BOTH □

32. Has this concept of productivity affected your approach to staff development?

   YES □
   NO □
   NOT YET □

Please comment: ____________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

* IF AWARD RESTRUCTURING HAS ALREADY BEEN IMPLEMENTED, PLEASE
ANSWER QUESTIONS 33-35. IF NOT PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 36.

33. How do you believe qualified library technicians and librarians have been affected by award restructuring in your library?

   OVERALL ADVANTAGED □
   OVERALL DISADVANTAGED □
   NEITHER □

Please comment: ____________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
34. Do you think that career path opportunities for qualified library technicians, in general, have been improved in your library under the new award?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Please comment:________________________________________________________

35. Do you think that career path opportunities for librarians, in general, have been improved in your library under the new award?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Please comment:________________________________________________________

* PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 39

36. How do you believe qualified library technicians and librarians will be affected by award restructuring in your library?

OVERALL ADVANTAGED ☐

OVERALL DISADVANTAGED ☐

NEITHER ☐

Please comment:________________________________________________________

37. Do you think that career path opportunities for qualified library technicians, in general, will be improved in your library under the new award?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Please comment:________________________________________________________
38. Do you think that career path opportunities for librarians, in general, will be improved in your library under the new award?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Please comment: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

39. Do you feel that enterprise bargaining within your institution, in general, will be beneficial to qualified library technicians and librarians?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Please comment: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

40. Has the Training Guarantee Act had any impact on staff development in your library?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Please comment: ____________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

41. Could you please comment on the relationship between staff development and strategic planning in your library.

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
42. What other issues are important for the design and delivery of staff development in your library?
APPENDIX 2
APPENDIX 2

CHANGES MADE TO THE 1992 SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The following changes were made to the 1992 questionnaire:

Question 2: “Position of respondent” and “Staff development experience or qualifications” were added. As well as indicating levels of qualifications and experience of the people responsible for staff development, this was intended to provide insight into the circumstances, motivations or biases which may have influenced how respondents completed the questionnaires.

Question 3: “Total number of staff” was added in order to place the numbers of librarians and technicians in context and to assist in the interpretation of questions 7-11.

Question 4: “library technicians” was changed to “qualified library technicians” to ensure consistent interpretation of the term by all respondents. It was felt that some libraries in 1992 had included technicians in training or unqualified staff doing paraprofessional work, whereas the focus of the wider study was to be on qualified technicians. The word ‘qualified’ was added to the term “library technician” wherever it appeared in the questionnaire.

Question 11 and 13: Split into “qlts”, i.e., qualified library technicians and “libns”, i.e., librarians, to improve the quality of the information provided. It was felt that there may well be differences in the treatment of the two groups.
Questions 11, 12, 17, 19, 25, 27 and 28: Previously required respondents to tick as many boxes as relevant. Where respondents did not tick the box there was no way of knowing whether their response should be interpreted as ‘No’, ‘No response’, ‘Not applicable’ etc. Multiple boxes were provided to allow Yes/No responses.

Questions 15 to 19: Sequence was changed to a more logical one, and arrows introduced to direct respondents to the appropriate next question.

Question 20: The option ‘Both’ was added to allow for respondents who felt that their awards placed equal emphasis on formal qualifications and experience.

Questions 29, 33 and 36: The word “overall” was added to encourage to assess the net effects of the factors under consideration.

Questions 34, 35, 37, 38 and 39: The words “in general” were added for the same reasons.

Question 41: New question included to examine the relationship between strategic planning and staff development.

Question 42: Same as 1992 Question 41.

Numerous questions which requested “If yes, in what way?” were changed to “Please comment” in order to reduce value judgments and collect a greater variety of responses.
APPENDIX 3

TRANSCRIPTS FROM INTERVIEWS

LIBRARY A:

INTERVIEWEE I.

*What is your understanding of the term, “staff development”?*

Providing staff with appropriate training opportunities which will enable them both to function more effectively in their current role and also to provide them with a training base for future career development.

*Do you differentiate between the term “training and development” and staff development? If so, how?*

There are specific training requirements, e.g., if you acquire a new system you have to train those people to use a new system. We make a distinction in this institution between acquisition of equipment and training people to use it. The acquisition budget incorporates a training component. However, the training of new staff who are not covered by this allocation is met from the staff development budget.

*Is your understanding of staff development the same as that of your library’s policies?*

Yes.
What impact, if any, do you feel national competency standards will have for SD of library and information service personnel?

Still waiting to see. There is a need (which seems sensible) to identify core competency skills for the various levels of staff and to have a systematic way of achieving those groups of skills. We are, again at institution level, developing a core curriculum for staff development which will outline the competencies required for each classification level. (This is for ADFA as a whole, not just the library). As far as the profession goes, it is very difficult to know. Yes you can do competency skills at the technician level quite happily, but once you start to move up into the higher professional levels, the competency idea begins to fall down and that is, I think, the objection within the profession to the whole competency debate, the fact that it is not seen as appropriate to professional levels. By the time you get to [ASF] levels 7 and 8, it starts to break down and is not really terribly useful.

For your staff?

Would be used in the process of defining job selection criteria. They would, therefore be useful.

But I’m also somewhat wary of the concept which says if you collect enough stamps, you can become a librarian.

In some ways, it’s endemic in the Australian education system. It’s the way part-time education has been done. This idea of gradually collecting a degree together and has lead numerous people to say, you know, “What is the quality of that degree? Does it
really mean anything?”, as opposed to someone who has done a solid 3 year degree and has been exposed to the ambiance, culture and the interplay of an institution and I think these are very interesting questions - and I don’t have an answer for them. They just worry me.

What role, if any, should ALIA play in staff development?

Should it be more active in the provision of continuing professional development activities?

Absolutely. This is one of the areas with which I have for a long time been less than happy. The piece of paper is not enough, you must have practical experience. I also supported the idea of the Associate Fellowship - it should be something you can work towards and apply for rather than being conferred upon you as a mark of exceptional achievement. A Fellowship should be given in recognition of someone keeping up with the profession and becoming more competent.

ALIA should provide a framework/model similar to the Library Association’s Framework [a career planner].

ALIA could get the ASLIB packages and Australianise them.

Although training initiatives should be encouraged at the grass roots level, the National Office agenda could be to identify programs which are to run each year and say to the Branches, well, here they are, now find someone to run them.

Validation of CPE activities?
Yes. Like the CPA.

*What are the strategic directions for staff development in your library sector?*

A lot of change is taking place so the whole process of coping with change is important. The ability to master the new technology is part of the process of adapting to change but the problem is finding the time to learn how to use it properly. We do not have the time or resources to train people properly for this. Obviously the Internet is the really big issue. To some extent it is becoming easier. For example, now we have gopher. There is no longer any need to issue commands. While the systems are getting easier to use, we are having to cope with more and more of them. Even if time is given to training in use of a system, there is often no time to practise its use under the normal pressure of the workplace.

*Questions of clarification pertaining to the questionnaire.*

*Timeline for restructuring?*

The Higher Education Award was implemented on the 30 August and we have 7 months to restructure against that award. The basic salary transfer should occur with very little movement. Secondary evaluations have to be carried out against each position where there is any doubt about them. This is the case with the library positions. The difficulty there is that there are no secondary descriptors. We are relying on ANU to produce the secondary descriptors and if we don’t like them we will produce our own. Until that happens we are still in a bit of a limbo.

*Do you train members of your staff and then require them to train in-house?*
We did that once and to some extent it’s working. This was in relation to Uniplex. We sent the systems officer out. She did the whole training course and a train-the-trainer course and she has been doing the in-house training and it’s reasonable. Its not brilliant because she is not gifted in training.

*In the 1993 response, you added that SEP affects the way SD is conceived in your library as well as it affecting SD planning. Why?*

We are now looking at integrating jobs therefore the process of what kind of training you need is going to flow also from that process - the cross training which will enable you to integrate jobs.

*Final Question*

SD on a needs rather than a wants basis. We did have a University wide staff performance review schedule set up. It was then canned. The aim of that was to identify staff training needs as much as anything else and I think this is the way to go.
LIBRARY: B

INTERVIEWEE: II

What is your understanding of the term “staff development”?

Well, I tend to make a distinction between training and development - I also use a term which I don’t want to roll into development and that is career paths. The term development is general professional development and is not directly job related. Training I see as being mainly job related and analysing what skills one needs to do a specific job and on this basis building up the training needs.

ANU has a staff development unit which runs personal development things like time management etc. but then the university also has very clearly defined training activities such as microcomputers, software and so on through a different agency, that is the computer services centre.

Within the library do you actually use the term SD and the term training?

In whatever documentation I put out I do make that distinction but I try to say there is a covering term for that and that is human resources development and I use the other 3 things as sub-sets. The career development aspect is handled mostly by the supervisors as they know their staff better than I but people do sometimes approach me for advice about units/courses/exchanges etc.

What role, if any, should ALIA play in SD?
Should there be assessment of CPE courses to ensure that quality standards are being met?

Well, this is my ultimate dream, that courses being run end up with a certificate which is recognised within the system - that it is valid when a person applies for another job as a quasi qualification. I would see ALIA taking that role of accrediting courses.

What impact, if any, do you feel the national competency standards will have for SD of library and information personnel?

If they come soon enough, yes. If they take too long we will have gone our own way. Our secondary descriptors are not competency-based but I have had on the drawing board a performance development scheme based on competencies. Basically its an adaptation of what CSIRO uses because I found their definitions very, very clear. The Public Service competencies I found to be fairly useless. I can’t see us applying this new scheme for a little while and if I have to amend the competencies as we go along, so be it.

What are the strategic directions for SD in your library?

I can give you the relevant page from our strategic plan. In practical terms I can certainly say that within the next year the purchase of a new system will impinge enormously on human resources development - massive retraining - this is a concrete outcome for staff, but it will also impact on what jobs will exist. So there will be a period of 6-8 months where we will not be sure what new training or retraining will be necessary. The change will be massive - from using dumb terminals to PCs, a change of culture.
SD directions in the academic library sector?

Again, technology related change. Getting to the various gopher systems and the Internet material. The really difficult part is sorting out the useful from the non-useful and how to process this into a format that is of interest to users. Acting as an intelligent filter is a major role for librarians because most academics don’t have the time to go through a lot of rubbish to get to something. We already download elements of Reuters and turn them into newsbriefs.

Questions specific to the questionnaires.

Initially I don’t want the first round of performance appraisal, whatever you want to call it, tied to increments because everybody wants to know how to work it and the first one is never perfect anyway. I had wanted it in place in July this year but it hasn’t happened. The ANU has unfortunately taken a very indecisive attitude towards its performance appraisal - they have implemented it for academic staff but not for general staff. They seem to feel it is not politic to do it now. Recruitment is based on historical duty statements, historical selection criteria. Now the selection criteria have to change due to the secondary descriptors but it still doesn’t get to the core of the analysis which is what do you need when you recruit someone at that level so I want to basically use that first of all to force areas to decide not that they want a nice person who is capable but a person who is nice and capable of X, Y and Z.

We haven’t applied multi-skilling to anyone in the professional level. In the clerical, yes and that was a university-wide instruction. The librarians commented that clerical staff were de-skilled to some extent as they didn’t do all the jobs they did before. On the
issue of retaining in-depth specialisms, even in the secondary descriptors we allow that someone is a specialist. At the very high levels, the top positions, people have to be multi-skilled, but not multi-skilled in terms of having 3 specialisations but of having one specialisation and having knowledge of and adequate skills in the rest and that’s where the need for a more flexible personality comes in. It basically is an add-on to a very thorough specialisation.
What is your understanding of the term “staff development”?

I see SD as one of our major management strategies so I put it right up there with working out staffing for the library and the budget because it is integral to those activities. It’s a way to mesh what we know about the staff with the staff profile we wish to develop and as part of that process we start to look at what goals we set for the library for the coming year, what programs, services, activities we need to achieve those goals, what people we need and then we look at what people we’ve got. We’ve interviewed everybody throughout the year so we know what they have been doing, we know what their interests are, what skills they say they have developed, those they haven’t developed, what training they still need, if they are ready for a change and so we look at opportunities as they come up and redeploy people based on classifications, aptitude and interest and skills, then start to redeploy people to fit in with the pattern of the staffing profile. So it’s integral to the way we run. It isn’t up to us to “set up a committee and see what seminars we should send people to” - that’s a very small part of it. When seminars come up because we know people’s training needs we know which people should be sent to something.

We work with each individual to develop skills we said we would develop. We don’t test people on how well these skills have been developed - evaluation is at a fairly superficial, subjective level, what does the person think.
Do you make any distinction between the terms SD and T&D?

They are interrelated. The two have to go together but they are different. Initially we had the SD program and worked out all the training people needed but if you didn’t go the next step and look at a training program, a year later nothing had happened so we had to go the next step and make somebody responsible for training, co-ordinating training and if we said someone was going to do something we got it organised. Trainers were trained; people developing programs were assisted to do that; it’s not just the trainee but we were looking at whether we had the trainers in place. The person we appointed is a librarian studying a Grad. Dip. in Adult Ed. and so, if you like, we were drawing upon the expertise of one of our staff to do that.

What impact, if any, do you feel national competency standards will have on SD of library and information services personnel? Impact on your library?

At the moment it doesn’t because I don’t really know what that is other than the staff member I was talking about was very interested in it but it hasn’t personally as a manager come across my desk in any way that it would have an impact. I feel that remote from it that I think well how could you do that. At the same time, once there are standards you tend to look at them and see whether there are any gaps in what you’re doing or not. So I don’t know that one would be bound by it but we always looked at ALIA documents on what librarians and library technicians do as a guide to looking at our duty statements to see whether or not we were in tune and at the right sort of level. I imagine if there were standards we would possibly look at them in the same way. But we’re not waiting for standards. As part of this new organisation we’re looking at and
as part of the introduction of the new award we’ve just gone through with all our staff at each level looking at what tasks they perform, what skills they think they require, what knowledge they require, so I suppose in essence we’ve done a skills audit. So for staff at every level we’ve now got a statement which they’ve all agreed to on knowledge, skills and tasks for that level. Now we didn’t set out saying this is a skills audit, but as a way to help staff articulate the skills they have and require to perform their tasks. So we ran all of these sessions really with a view to helping them when they were having discussions with the University’s personnel industrial officer on looking at the new award because that officer has been interviewing all of the staff asking them about what do they do and what skills have they got with a view to taking that information and mapping it to the new higher education award. So we did our exercise to help the staff.

We made it voluntary. But most of the staff came. Our training manager acted as a facilitator. Each classification group met (i.e., old classifications - not those of the new award) and worked out their tasks, then the skills, then the knowledge. They then had a copy of the final draft that they could take to their interview. Aside from the benefit to the individual, from the management point of view you had a current view right across the system of what people thought was going on and where they thought they were at.

*ALIA’s role in SD.*

Not staff development as such but as a professional organisation running professional activities. I think its up to individual organisations to see whether what they are running will add to the SD program of the organisation.

*Validation of CPE activities.*
Firstly I don’t see how ALIA could validate courses. I mean, how could it be on top of all the courses that are run? I send my people to a lot that aren’t library courses at all, run by management faculties. I went to a thing myself a few weeks ago on accelerated learning and multi-media which was run by another group of totally different professionals again, so I don’t see how ALIA could with the best will in the world validate all the sorts of courses that I think people now need. It also depends where an individual is at with their knowledge as to how much they get out of a course.

Related to that, if you have 2 people and one is going ahead and one isn’t, again I’ve come around to looking at individual differences - why is that the case - some people need a structured environment, they need guidance, they need someone to set parameters with them and they can learn within that environment. The person next to them may thrive in a totally unstructured environment and those are the people you need to be putting in different sorts of jobs and using their sorts of skills - still the same classification - putting them in an environment where you need the self -motivated person and putting him with a team of people like that who are doing things that are innovative in the organisation. So that’s the day-to- day level and of course when you set up positions, if you’re the real go- getter, then that’s the person who is going to go ahead anyway career-wise. We’ve been saying to people look, the organisation can only do so much for you in SD, it is not here for your career development. You have a role to play in that and so that things you go to in your own time they will pay off -you will get the payoff over the lifetime of your career. You won’t get the payoff within this organisation as we don’t have a promotion system for general staff. So it has to be when
a vacancy occurs, the best person for the job is selected. If you’ve gone and done all those things yourself as well as the SD you probably come out with an edge.

*What factors will influence SD in this library?*

The strategic direction of the organisation. We will no longer be called a library (the building will still be called a library) but an information and communication services division which has in it librarians, clerical people, technicians and computer people - hardware and software and looking at how those people work together in ways they have never worked together before. We are trying to get people to think differently about their relationships - that is going to affect the SD because in that we are looking at which services none of us are currently providing but which we now know are needed on the campus, e.g., good documentation for training, whether it’s the training of clients on how to use personal computers or training them how to use CD-ROM; training on how to use the university’s new administrative systems - the whole area of training end-users as well as training operators, as well as training the trainers. There’s a whole need, I mean we’ve got plenty of people who can write technical stuff but we haven’t got people who can translate that into a nice readable way for people to learn. So we’ve identified technical writing, if you like, as a whole area. The whole area of multi-media is a new one and while we’ve got a few of the people who would make up the team we’re missing some of the creative type people we need on the team. We’ve got the programs, we’ve got the librarians, we’ve got the academics but we haven’t got the instructional design, graphics, creative type people who can say, this is what the technology will do, what are you trying to do, let’s get the most out of it. So there are whole new areas we’ll be getting into as well as improving things that we haven’t been
doing that well in the past. A lady who is currently a secretary in one of the groups that we are bringing together and she is interested in training, and she sees she could be out helping other secretaries on campus with training on how to get started with PCs. So if you follow that through, with her you’d say well right, we’ll give you training on how to train other people - you’ve got the technical knowledge. Again you’ve got to know the people you’ve got before you say we need new people. You need to know the people who have an interest already who you could train up. We increasingly are selecting people who we think will thrive in this environment. So we’re looking for people who we think are flexible, who will say ‘yes, give me something else to do - I can cope with this and that and that’ because increasingly people who can only cope with the one thing are the ones it seems to me there is less room for anymore.

Factors impinging on the academic library sector?

There’s no doubt that the whole shift to the electronic campus is a factor and the problem is that while looking at this you’re still trying to maintain the print campus so people have got to cope with both so that is the thing at the moment that is forcing SD whether you are into it or not.

Given the user response to certain things like Business Periodicals On Disc, given that the user says isn’t that terrific and this is the only thing I want in this library, because that’s what the consumer wants, if the suppliers respond to that, it will radically alter the way we think about collections. It just depends on how quickly that takes off.
We haven’t been influenced by what’s being done externally. We’ve been a step ahead. I can’t see that award restructuring will make any difference now - I can’t see it will have an impact.

TGA. In 1992 the University said you must allocate a certain amount of your budget to training, and we hadn’t previously thought how much we were allocating, so we did as a result make a conscious effort to cost through what we were doing with training - it made us more conscious of what we were doing I suppose but, having done that, in 1993 the TGA has had no further impact.

*Final question on questionnaire.*

Comment that staff were trained out.

Training manager felt that staff needed time to consolidate. People had reached the limit of what they could learn. There’s so much to learn at the moment it’s just mind blowing. There is a limit. We are working in this incredibly stressful environment and people are having to learn so much - their own motivation is that they wish to perfect whatever they learn and of course there’s no time to do that. A lot of the staff don’t have time to practise what they learn, plus we are working in an environment where people are moving from functional specialisations to a team approach based on faculties.

Some staff have expressed their worry of losing specialist staff - who will be our cataloguing expert? My response is why would we need a cataloguing expert any more? People are hanging on to the standards of the past - those things which made a good library. It’s a security thing of moving away from that. So we’ve tried to say there are a
number of people they can use as resource people and if they don’t know the answer they can ask. That way they will learn and know for next time. You must establish which things you must have the standards for and which things really don’t matter.
LIBRARY: D

INTERVIEWEES: IV and V

What is your understanding of the term “staff development”? 

V

Any courses which we feel are of value both to the staff and the library service rather than just being more personal development, I mean we do undertake some personal development courses which are of relevance - things like assertiveness training - which we feel are relevant to their position. There’s a whole range of seminars and conferences that we would include in there because they are developmental and for the corporate good, such as TQM. Customer relations is one we’re particularly interested in, and last year we ran a couple of internal courses using an external consultant and got quite a good response from those.

IV

We are at the cross-roads at the moment and are re-examining the training dollar and the thinking in the Department on human services is to link training with corporate plans. Alan mentioned customer services. One of the focuses in the corporate plan is on the client and we make sure that service for the client is what we are about so a lot of the focus will be on issues in the corporate plan. Another major change we’ve gone through is decentralising admin. and financial responsibility so we do want the managers to have financial understanding. Human resource planning is another one and I suppose ultimately, staff devt. within regions so that regional managers can identify quite quickly
what their needs are. We have 8 library outlets but only the one collection and we now have 3 regions - north, central and south - as well as the support service group. We now have 3 regional librarians who are taking responsibility for admin and financial tasks and they are taking more and more responsibility for the training of their staff.

V

We are looking at drawing up an agreement between Human Resources Management and the Staff Development Committee and either a region or branch and setting out their needs and a program for the coming year. It’s looking at all levels from the ASO1s to the senior officers.

*Do you differentiate btw. SD and T&D?*

IV

Our use of SD encompasses training, e.g. counter staff training or assertiveness training. We take it fairly broadly.

V

As well as the range of in-house and external short course training we have separate study bank arrangements for people doing continuing courses. We treat that separately as it comes under our parent body, City Services. This is tied up with the TGA.

*What impact, if any, do you feel national competency standards will have for SD of library and information service personnel?*

V
I see them as being useful. They will give us some idea as to the needs of the staff, particularly the core competencies, and if attained, these will enable staff to branch out in other areas. One of our problems as I see it at the moment is that we have not had things such as word processing, spreadsheeting or any of those basic office skills as we haven’t had the equipment or the software available. We are just about to install those throughout the Service and we’re looking at starting to train people in those skills. Not each individual, necessarily, but on a needs basis.

IV

On a broader issue, we had a fairly major consultancy review of the Service and one of the issues that came out was the 2 employment streams, the clerical and the professional, and the consultants found that this 2 stream employment thing created problems. The clericals didn’t have much of a career path. Once they reached a certain level they had to have a qualification, therefore they have to stay where they are or gain a qualification. Many choose to stay put and only work part-time as the career opportunity wasn’t there. I believe the competencies might serve to alleviate this situation.

We have grade 2 clerical officers with 8 or more years of experience. We then appoint a professional grade 1 straight out of university. The clerical person teaches them the job and then the professional supervises the person who taught them all about the job and the 8 year’s experience counts for nothing when these people come in.
Our award doesn’t recognise library technicians. They are in the ASO stream. Quite a few go on to university, get their degree and transfer to the professional stream. But by this time they are on ASO4 and then they transfer over to a PO1 and the pay is virtually no different anyway. Also we have very few ASO4 positions in the library. Hence they transfer out to gain promotion and we lose valuable experience and expertise.

*Has SEP had an impact on the way SD is delivered?*

V

I think so. I’ve been in SD for 18 months now. One of the things we are looking at is the core competencies, particularly at the ASO level because they want to increase their skills and I think once we get those core competencies in place we’ll probably have to look at those and see where we are heading with our training but, you know, that’s something down the track. Generally I think a lot of the competencies we are probably providing anyway.

IV

It’s actually formalising them and then reflecting them in your classifications and the way you can really use your expert people to give them career paths and to utilise their skills up the line. We have the Public Sector Union coverage for the whole library service - we have the Professional Division and the General Division - and the ASOs vs the professionals always comes through as an issue very strongly.

*Role of ALIA in PD?*

V
I know the local Association does run courses and we tend to send people along to
them. I know there’s one next week on rethinking reference which we are sending
people to.

_Do you believe ALIA should be more actively seeking your needs and responding?_

IV/V

I think so. We would certainly support courses which we felt met our needs and from
what we can gather, these courses do a travelling road show around each capital city
and I think they could provide a lot more training of this nature.

_Certification of PD?_

V

Most courses now give a certificate to say you have attended, which is good for your
CV, and I think ALIA courses would be recognised as being of a certain standard.
Certainly I think ALIA courses would be recognised within the profession. The problem is, even though the person may learn something, how does ALIA ensure that the standard is maintained back in the workplace?

Strategic directions?

Devolving SD responsibilities to a managerial level. Other factors?

We are now thinking about whether we need a dedicated position for SD rather than the looser committee structure to bring it all together. Against that, we do want the regional managers to have that as part of their role. You can’t have somebody responsible for everybody’s T&D, the managers have to take that on. They know their staff and their training needs and how to tie these to the corporate thrust.

Do you have any link between performance appraisal and SD?

We are caught up with the Commonwealth Government’s performance agreements for senior people, but the intent is to have performance agreement separated from pay as again a part of a managerial role so that Alan could have agreements with a range of his staff because at the moment it’s artificially stopped at senior officer level and I’ve always maintained, that if you don’t have a formal agreement in place, quite often you would not get feedback from your supervisor, but this forces you to sit down at regular intervals to...
discuss achievements. It’s a formalised mechanism of getting feedback. Your knowledge of strengths and weaknesses leads to the development of SD plans. The Commonwealth Scheme uses rating scales and pockets within one area would be rated differently and because there’s so much attached to it - thousands of dollars - it’s become very divisive and inequitable.

We are sharpening our focus on business planning, and because we have a complicated Comm. public service structure where you have a dept., a division, a branch and a section and we are the section down at the bottom, there’s a layer of corporate planning all the way through and at least now there is some commonality between what the key goals and objectives are all the way through as the plan cascades so ours is fairly focussed now where as before it was fairly local.

Areas in common with other State libraries?

IV

The links with other libraries are quite strong. The library community works together. We have closer links with other State libraries than we do with our own Govt. Dept. libraries - they won’t have anything to do with us - a local political thing.
To a certain extent we are also influenced by having the National [Library] here - its only 20 years since we split from them and there’s still a lot of staff who came from there.

Would you consider any of the other progressive State library models, e.g., the State Library of NSW, here?

You mean their entrepreneurial approach?

Certainly I think we are different from any of those libraries in the sort of clientele we have. I’d say we would probably have a much better educated and a much more aware clientele, more demanding, than any other State library.

We are also much more visible in the political arena than State libraries in the larger State Government systems. But we do want to look at going down the track of some of those new initiatives instituted by libraries such as the State Library of NSW. I know they have certainly gone a long way in selling the way they do things. We still struggle with the way we can’t retain our own revenue, so we become creative in finding ways of not making money so that we don’t have to give it back.
We are affected in our entrepreneurial approach by this but we will look at other models and pick out the best bits which suit our operation.

**Questions pertaining to the questionnaire**

LTs are all ASOs. Not recognised under the award. In the desirable category you can put that LT qualifications would be an advantage.

Timeframe for Corporate Plan.

IV

3-year timeframe and 1 year business plans within this.

1992 neither quals nor experience. 1993 Both being looked at.

V

Just my feeling that its now only the senior positions that you can have qualifications stipulated. Mandatory qualifications begin at PO1 level.

Equivalent to ASO4.

1992 Skills Audit a current project of the SD Committee. Is this ongoing.

V

We had a dummy run in one of our branches. My predecessor did this. It was OK but what we’re looking at now is running it with the Human Resources Management and they are suggesting that it’s not an individual skills audit but an audit of the needs of a Branch or Region.
IV

It's a broader focus looking at the corporate good.

V

And setting up an agreement for a Region or a Branch depending on what level we particularly want to go to and in setting up an agreement we'll have Vic., the Branch or Regional Librarian or both, a PO and an ASO Officer who are also union members so we get the union representation and we would expect those people to be meeting with their levels so that they are covering their areas and to get feedback on what people think their needs are.
INTERVIEWEES: VI and VII

What is your understanding of the term “staff development”?

VII

It would have a number of tiers.

First, in ensuring the staff are developed in order to meet the requirements of the section they work in, but also developing staff with future requirements in mind, taking into account a feeling of where we need to go as an organisation and making sure staff are developed so that they can take us there. The other thing is succession planning and career planning in terms of developing staff - to see them move through to become managers. This is probably one of the things we do least well here. We don’t as an organisation have an approach to succession planning, it’s fairly add hoc and we do have difficulty, I think, identifying people who we think should be given that extra grooming to provide them with the skills for later promotion. It’s not necessarily a lack of commitment or wish to do that. One of the problems lies in the nature of the environment we operate in. The pool of people we have to promote has become considerably reduced and the very nature of a redundancy program means that your better people tend to leave.
VI

The other aspect is that we are increasingly using part-time staff and those people often have no particular wish to work full-time in order to gain promotion and they aren’t in the pool of promotable people so, this again narrows our options.

One thing I’d add to that is we also need to provide opportunities for staff to develop their view of what the State Library does in particular, but their professionalism if you like. There’s a tendency for people once they get into a specialist area, which goes with very big organisations, for them to focus in that very narrow area and to feel that little else in that organisation matters to them and so they haven’t got that capacity to move across unless they have kept that broader view and staff development can assist with that, funds permitting.

VII

Increasingly with the SD area will be developing people in such a way that they don’t feel totally blocked and discontented because we have to face the fact that people will not go any further than their level in the organisation and if we are intent on providing a good service, often these people are our front-line staff. If they are jaded, there’s no way they will provide a good service. Just from a purely pragmatic management point of view, we can’t afford disgruntled and discontented staff.
Since we’ve been in the Department of Education and the Arts, our strategic planning process has been fairly top down and the Dept. has for the last 3 years issued a strategic plan which has incorporated a mission statement for the Dept. and goals for all of the sections including the State Library. We have been functioning within that, although it has naturally focused on the big things and the detail and the operational aspects have been just assumed. Since then, individual sections have also gone through their own strategic planning exercises. Most recently I spent a couple of days with Branch Library Services, which has just been restructured into a state-wide service, with a facilitator going through what cultural and business issues we have to address, what our focus is and so on, all as an extension of our strategic plan. There is beginning to be an element of bottom-up but not quite bottom-up yet and what we are now doing is going through and conveying the message to all staff in the unit and get feedback from them and modify as we go. Now there’s a training element there, of course, in just the process, but there’s also, as part of that strategy, a commitment to training for the staff and the message is definitely coming out.

_Do you differentiate between the ways you use the terms “training” and “development” here in the State Library?_  

VI

I personally do. Although my training plans, in fact, incorporate both. My own view is that competency is very much competency-based and that development is that extra breadth to a person’s competencies. They need to know their relevance and their place
in the system and how tangentially they can develop and so on and this leads them to be a more complete professional in whatever job they are doing.

VII

I agree with that.

*What impact, if any, do you feel national competency standards will have for SD of library and information services personnel?*

VI

I think it’s a nice bureaucratic concept. I think that to list all the competencies required by our most lowly library assistants will take many, many tasks to be listed and to be assessed and accredited. I think it’s a way of doing it and I think the real value comes if in fact there is genuine opportunity for transfer from one organisation to another on the basis of a declaration of what your competencies are. The thing that concerns me, I guess, is that the further up the tree you go, the more general the description of your functions is. The further up the tree you go the more you lose the profession-specific competencies.

I certainly think that from an employer’s point of view, it makes it very easy for us if someone comes to us with a list of competencies that have been acquired outside the organisation that have been given by an accredited, reputable body, such as a school of librarianship because it saves us from having to begin from scratch and it also means that any prior learning has already been assessed and acknowledged and then what they acquire within an organisation once employed are those things that are developmental or
general skills like budget control, personnel management skills, things one acquires by experience.

VII

If competencies are to include an attitudinal component, it would be a way of identifying a range of competencies and it could be useful in the lower level positions but it might also address personal skills/personal attitudes. Many of the people who come through library schools are academically equipped, but lack the personal attributes to work in a service-based profession and thus we can’t employ them. A competency based approach to library school curricula could also pose problems for employers in that it might be harder to reject a candidate for employment if that person is deemed “competent” to perform in the given employment area.

VI

Where there is a situation of oversupply of graduates, employers will still be able to select using their own organisation’s criteria. The problem would be highlighted if demand exceeded supply, because then employers would have to select those who were industry competent, even if they felt the person were not quite right for the job or its environment.
On-going CPD or T&D - does ALIA have a role?

VI

Certainly in selecting staff for promotion we do take their approach to CPD into account. Evidence of staff having maintained their currency, even if it is keeping abreast of the professional literature, is required.

VII.

ALIA may have a role in accrediting on-going professional development courses. We have a lot of staff who are not geared to technology and technology is moving so fast it is hard to keep up-to-date. Having staff that are interested, that have skills, that are not afraid of technology is very important. Expense of having to send staff interstate must, of course, be taken into consideration. ALIA has a role to play in deciding which courses are needed, which ones to support and accredit rather than just endorse the need for CPD.

VI

The area where I have felt the need for CPD is in the area of statistical work, such as market surveying, market research, statistical analysis - things that are used as managerial tools all the time - as well as business plans.

VII

The sort of people attracted to the profession are not necessarily those who want to gain these business skills.
Questions pertaining to the questionnaire.

State of Award Restructuring?

There was an approach which supported three strands for the whole state public service: clerical, technical and professional. This proposal then disappeared and now the Government is proposing industry-based awards - and its not clear whether the State Library will be considered an industry or whether it will be part of the larger Education Dept. With the initial proposal, at least librarians would have had the backing of all other professional groups and unions in the State, e.g., in wage cases. The industry based approach means that librarians will be a small, relatively weak industry group. Librarians are not skilled at arguing their case in industry or enterprise agreements.

Training Needs Analysis

The training plan looks at the strategic staff development needs of the staff. There is a need for accessible training, particularly in the area of technology. This is an area which will have long term effect on SD for the State Library.

Change is the other area.

Apart from the training plan, each staff member needs their own, on-going training plan.
There has been an understanding for some time that there are many things LTs can do to free librarians to do other things. This will inevitably mean more training for LTs. Even without award restructuring, there will be other pressures which force this issue. With a better defined role, it would be easier to justify greater training expenditure for LTs.

SEP and Multiskilling

We went through a restructuring of Technical services last year and we rewrote everyone’s PDs to take into account multiskilling so that people had a much more diverse range of work to do. This may well have given everyone a much more interesting job but reduced productivity! Of course, once people have mastered their new areas, productivity will catch up because people are more satisfied in their work. It is also positive in that they have a much broader view of their workplace and there’s much more cooperation and that leads to greater efficiency in the end, too. Because we are so technology driven, we are limited to a certain extent to what the systems will allow us to do.

Flatter Organisational Structure

About half the middle layer of management has disappeared due to restructuring. We have utilised technology to cope with that (automating hitherto manual libraries). The loss of the middle mgt areas means that we are very fragile in terms of delivering front line service. We are down to bare bones but if our management strategies are correct, if
we make judicious use of technology and can continue to increase productivity, we
should be alright.
APPENDIX 4
APPENDIX 4

PRINCIPLES OF THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE RECOGNITION OF TRAINING (NFROT)

The following principles are taken from *Nationally Recognised Training - Bringing it Together 1992*, p. 10

Principle 1 - Identified Industry Training Need/Market Need

Accredited courses will be based on competency standards expected in employment. The Framework will draw on the expert advice of industry and educational bodies at both national and State/Territory levels about their training needs. These bodies play a major role in the accreditation of courses.

Principle 2 - Course Standards Appropriate to the Requirements of the Particular Credential

The accreditation process ensures that the quality of courses and the standard of credentials are maintained. The standard of the course must match both the credential offered and national guidelines on tertiary award courses.

Principle 3 - Competency-Based Training

All courses must focus on competencies. Courses must include any national competencies endorsed by the National Training Board, where they exist.

Principle 4 - Multiple Entry and Exit
Accredited courses must recognise prior learning and enable learners to enter and exit the course at various points.

Principle 5 - Flexible Learning

Learning may taken place in a variety of environments. Alternative delivery modes must be indicated.

Principle 6 - Articulation

Courses submitted for accreditation must show how they relate to other courses and include provisions for credit transfer to other relevant courses.

Principle 7 - Customisation of Courses

Courses shall be capable of being adapted to meet the particular needs of the industry, individuals and other educational institutions.

Principle 8 - Promote Access and Participation

Accredited courses must be accessible to everyone, regardless of age, gender, social or educational background. Where possible, prior learning will be recognised and bridging programs will be available to overcome barriers such as limited education or a non-English speaking background.
Principle 9 - Appropriate Assessment

Assessment methods must be carefully designed to measure the attainment of competencies, and ultimately, the successful completion of a course.

Principle 10 - Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

Accredited courses will be monitored and evaluated regularly.

**ASSESSMENT**

NFROT sets out five principles for assessment (Nationally Recognised Training - Bringing It Together 1992, p.11):

Principle 1 - Competency-Based Training

Assessment will measure whether competencies have been gained. These competencies will be developed with input from industry and endorsed by the National Training Board.

Principle 2 - Flexibility in Approach

Assessment may include methods such as practical exercises, written tests, computer-generated tests, and where applicable:

- interviews;
- portfolios;
- employer reports; and
• written assignments.

Principle 3 - Validity

Assessment methods must actually measure what they say they measure. For example, an essay alone would be an inappropriate method of assessment for measuring practical panel beating skills.

Principle 4 - Reliability

This means that any trained assessor would reach the same conclusions about a person’s achievement of a particular competency.

Principle 5 - Recognition of Prior Learning

Provision must be made for the recognition of prior learning.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

NFROT also sets out principles for the recognition of prior learning (*Nationally Recognised Training - Bringing It Together 1992*, p. 11):

Principle 1 - Competence

The recognition of prior learning will focus on the competencies a person has acquired as a result of both formal and informal training and experience - not how, when or where the learning occurred.

Principle 2 - Commitment
It is important that training providers have a commitment to recognising the prior learning of individuals. This will ensure that individuals will not have to duplicate their training unnecessarily.

Principle 3 - Access

Every individual may have his or her prior learning recognised.

Principle 4 - Fairness

All participants must be confident that the recognition of prior learning process is fair.

Principle 5 - Support

Individuals applying for recognition of prior learning must be given adequate support. Personnel involved in the assessment process must be trained to support applicants so that an efficient and effective service is maintained.
underlying capacities

3
Generic capacities
(Meaningful only through links to 2 and 1)

2
Discipline based capacities
(e.g., knowledge skills and attitude)

1
Observable practice
*NFROT = NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE RECOGNITION OF TRAINING
Figure 3
AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

A. MICROECONOMIC REFORM

Elements
A1
Industrial Arena - workplace rearrangement
  Award restructuring
  Enterprise bargaining

A2
National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA)
  TGA
  Competency standards
  Competency-based training
  Australian Standards Framework
  National Framework for the
  Recognition of Training

B. STATE AND ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Elements
B1
Demographics
  Size
  Location

C. IMPACT

Staff Development in relation to:

Elements
C1 Knowledge and application of A1 by B
  Do academic and state libraries know about award restructuring and enterprise bargaining?
  Have these libraries any experience of award restructuring (SEP) and enterprise bargaining?
  C2 Knowledge and application of A2 to B
  To what extent do academic and state libraries understand the concepts embodies in the NTRA?
  Is there evidence of NFROT principles (including recognition of prior learning) impacting on design and delivery of staff development in these libraries?
  Is there evidence of other aspects of the NTRA (e.g., competency and CBT standards) impacting on design and delivery of staff development in these libraries?
  C3 Are there differences between academic and state libraries?
  C4 Evidence of rate of diffusion of microeconomic reform strategies in academic and state libraries.
Relationship between the alignment of state & federal politics with the takeup rate of A1 and Az by B1
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