Evaluation of the 
Expanding Career Options for Women 
Program
Report written and submitted in August 2016 by:

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Department of Training and Workforce Development
Policy Planning and Innovation
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Acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AASN</td>
<td>Australian Apprenticeship Support Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATE</td>
<td>Aboriginal Training and Employment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVETMISS</td>
<td>Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWDC</td>
<td>Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTF</td>
<td>Construction Training Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DLGC</td>
<td>Department of Local Government and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTWD</td>
<td>Department of Training and Workforce Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBT</td>
<td>Employment Based Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAQ</td>
<td>Frequently Asked Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTO</td>
<td>Group Training Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT</td>
<td>Institution Based Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTO</td>
<td>Registered Training Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRS</td>
<td>Training Records System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDC</td>
<td>Workforce Development Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNTT</td>
<td>Women in Non-Traditional Trades</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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1. Executive summary

1.1. Introduction

In 2015 the State government launched the Expanding Career Options for Women scholarship program. Over four years there are up to 400 scholarships of up to $3,000 available to women who undertake training in an eligible qualification in a non-traditional industry or trade. The program is a joint initiative of the Department of Training and Work (Department), the Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) and the Construction Training Fund (CTF). The Department and the CTF contribute to the funding of the program.

There have been two rounds of scholarship funding to date. A total of 218 scholarships have been awarded, of which only 64 have been claimed.

An evaluation was commissioned by Procurement Strategy to inform how the program is run in the future and, once the program has finished, assess the outcomes of the program.

The evaluation collected data via surveys administered to round 1 and round 2 scholarship recipients who had not yet made a claim. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with round 2 claimants and a representative from CTF.

1.2. Findings

EQ1. Is the scholarship take-up rate in rounds 1 and 2 adequate to meet the target of 400 places over four years? If not, what is an appropriate rate?

The current performance indicates that less than half of the allocated 400 scholarships will be claimed. The current conversion rate is projected to be 44% overall after all round 1 and 2 claims have been submitted. The conversion rate varies from 7% for apprentices and trainees, 55% for employers and 60% for institution based training.

If there is no change in the strategy employed by the Department, an additional 1,200 scholarships would have to be awarded to achieve the target of 400 places over four years.

If a more targeted approach is used to select scholarship recipients by changing the mix of employment based and institution based scholarships awarded, and awarding to apprentices and trainees who have found an employer, approximately 520 scholarships would have to be awarded to fulfil the 400 places over four years.
EQ2. *Does there need to be adjustments to the promotion of the scholarship program?*

If continued, the existing promotion strategy of the scholarship program will not generate the level of interest required to award enough scholarships to fill the 400 places.

The most common sources of information for the scholarship program are via the training provider and word of mouth. The most common delivery method was via the web, often when women were searching for courses.

Promotion efforts need to be increased for future rounds in order to award 520 scholarships to achieve 303 training places.

EQ3. *What affects the conversion rate from a successful applicant being awarded a scholarship to then commencing and working towards completion of training? Are there any changes that can be made to improve the conversion rate?*

Key success factors are promotion by training providers and prior study. The key barriers are financial needs, starting work, working full time and family commitments.

Procurement Strategy has done much to help successful recipients find a training place or an employer by developing a frequently asked questions (FAQ) information sheet that addresses the barriers found. In addition to this Procurement strategy has also provided a large amount of telephone guidance regarding courses, pre-requisites and general issues.

1.3. **Recommendations**

1. **In order to meet the target of 400 places in four years the Department will need to increase the number of scholarship recipient awards in future rounds.**

An initial target of awarding 250 scholarships should be adopted for the next round until further evidence is gathered about the impact of recommended strategies have had on increasing the number of applicants and improving conversion rates (assuming there are a minimum of 250 eligible applications).

2. **Increase the numbers of applications for the scholarship program.**

   a) Make amendments to the eligibility criteria to include school students so that they may apply. Retain the requirements that applicants must have completed school prior to commencing study or employment.

   b) Develop a comprehensive communication strategy in conjunction with Communications and Marketing. Aspects that should be included are:

   - Focus on the internet and training providers, the current main sources of information. This includes promoting on all websites under the Department's control. TAFEs should be included in promotions. Liaise with the Managing Directors to promote on their websites, via their lecturers and any other internal communication channels.
• Engage as many of the Department's partners as possible. Special attention should be given to existing apprentice and trainee employers and training organisations found via Training Records System (TRS) records.

• Promote to those considering their careers via Career Centre, Workforce Development Centres (WDC), Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres (AWDC) and Aboriginal Training and Employment offices (ATE).

c) Adopt an open-ended round approach by leaving the application process open until the required applications are processed. This will need to be supported by a continuous promotional campaign to be effective.

3. **Improve on the existing conversion rates by selecting those more likely to convert from being awarded a scholarship to claiming the scholarship.**

a) More focus should be placed on awarding institution based scholarships rather than employment-based scholarships. The majority of the scholarship awards should be institution based.

b) When assessing applications, priority should be given to:
   • Employment based applicants who have identified an employer.
   • Institution based applicants who have made contact with a training provider.
   • Institution based applicants who have undertaken previous training, preferably in a related course.

c) Address barriers to training in the FAQ. A review of the FAQ information sheet should be undertaken, to ensure the key messages are incorporated.
2. Introduction

The State Government has committed to fund up to 400 scholarships through the Expanding Career Options for Women scholarship program over a four-year period. These scholarships form part of the current government’s election promises.

Scholarships to the value of $3,000 each are available to women over the age of 18 who have left school and who undertake training at Certificate III level or above in eligible qualifications. This scholarship program is a joint initiative of the Department of Training and Workforce Development, the Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) and the Construction Training Fund (CTF).

Scholarships are available to women and employers planning to train in more than 170 eligible qualifications, linked to non-traditional trades and occupations.

For institutional training $3,000 is available for women planning to undertake a publicly funded institutional training course in an approved qualification.

For apprenticeships and traineehips $1,000 is available for women planning to undertake an approved apprenticeship or traineeship; and their employers receive a $2,000 incentive payment.

Scholarships can be used to help with costs associated with training, including student fees, learning resources, mentoring, coaching, tools, equipment, accommodation, transport and childcare fees.

There have been two rounds of scholarship funding to date. The first round was announced by the Minister for Training and Workforce Development in March 2015. Applications opened at this time and remained open until May 2015. On 1 July 2015 it was announced that 100 scholarships had been awarded, of which CTF agreed to fund 25. Due to the timing of the announcement, some of the successful applicants who wished to undertake institution based training (IBT) missed the Semester 2 enrolment period. It was recommended at the time to increase the offers to 110 to allow for attrition, however this was not supported.

Applications for the second round opened on 1 October 2015 and closed 31 October 2015. The Department received 118 eligible applications and all were awarded a scholarship in early December 2015. The CTF agreed to fund up to 15 of the scholarships.

Each scholarship has a 15 month duration claim period to allow for the probation period expiry dates and late in the year enrolments.
2.1. Evaluation purpose

The evaluation was planned in 2015, its purpose twofold: firstly, to inform how the program is run from 2016 onwards; and secondly, to determine the overall success of the program. Hence, the evaluation was designed in two parts, initially as a formative and subsequently as a summative evaluation.

The formative evaluation aims to inform the future direction of the program by examining the experiences of the women participating in the program, reasons for low take-up, difficulties in finding employers, as well as the Department’s communication processes. It seeks to determine how the program can be improved, including ways to increase the number of women and employers participating within the current program budget.

The summative evaluation will assess the overall success of the program in improving the rates of women working in non-traditional industries and trades.

2.2. Key evaluation questions

The evaluation questions for the two stages of the evaluation are as follows:

Formative:
1. Is the scholarship take-up rate in rounds 1 and 2 adequate to meet the target of 400 places over four years? If not, what is an appropriate rate?
2. Does there need to be adjustments to the promotion of the scholarship program?
3. What affects the conversion rate from a successful applicant being awarded a scholarship to then commencing and working towards completion of training? Are there any changes that can be made to improve the conversion rate?

Summative:
4. How do the participants of this program compare to other like students in terms of completion rates and outcomes?
5. Has the program improved the rates of women studying and working in non-traditional industries and trades?

2.3. Reporting of evaluation findings

This document reports the findings for the formative evaluation questions only. It is based on the evidence provided by rounds 1 and 2.

An internal evaluation report was written by Procurement Strategy following round 1 and informed round 2 of the program.

Reporting for the summative phase of the evaluation will occur once sufficient data on training and employment outcomes have been collected.
3. Methodology

3.1. Quantitative research

A survey was administered to recipients of the scholarship who had not yet submitted a claim.

A two-pronged data collection approach was used in rounds 1 and 2. In the first instance, participants were contacted electronically via an online survey sent to their email address; two reminders were also sent. Where there was no response to the emails, the respondent was contacted by telephone and asked to complete the survey over the telephone.

Round 1: In January 2016, all of the round 1 successful applicants (potential students and employers) who had yet to commence training were surveyed (74 training places). The aim of the survey was to have an early indication of the conversion of round 1 successful applicants into training enrolments before the end of the enrolment period for Semester 1 2016. There was a concern that the conversion would be low. The aim of gathering the data prior to the Semester 1 enrolment period in February was to allow enough time for the Department to address any barriers found to taking up training places.

The survey was launched on 5 January 2016 to 74 scholarship recipients who had not yet claimed. The first reminder email was sent on 11 January and the second on 18 January. By 25 January, 43 recipients had completed the survey. Follow up phone calls were made to the remaining 31 recipients, with 21 completing the survey over the phone. In total 64 of the 74 completed the survey, a response rate of 86%.

Round 2: Data collection occurred in May 2016. The survey was launched on 4 May to 78 individual scholarship recipients who had not yet claimed. The first reminder email was sent on 9 May and the second on 13 May. By 16 May, 43 recipients had completed the survey. Follow up phone calls were made to the remaining 34 recipients, with 28 completing the survey over the phone. In total 71 of the 78 completed the survey, a response rate of 91%.

A survey was administered via the telephone to the five scholarship recipients who were employers; 18 scholarships had been awarded between them.

Three surveys were developed for the different types of scholarship: institution based courses; apprenticeships and traineeships; employers. The surveys were developed by the evaluation team and Procurement Strategy. They are provided in Appendix A.

3.2. Desk research

VET Enrolment Collection (AVETMISS) and training contract data were examined to monitor training pathways and outcomes of the scholarship recipients.

Program documentation and current promotional material were examined.
3.3. Qualitative research

Scholarship claimants from round 2 were interviewed over the phone. Three attempts were made to contact all 21 of the claimants. 16 in-depth interviews were conducted.

An in-depth interview was held via the telephone with a representative from CTF.

The interview schedules for the in-depth interviews are provided in Appendix B. They were developed in conjunction with Procurement Strategy.
4. EQ1. Is the scholarship take-up rate in rounds 1 and 2 adequate to meet the target of 400 places over four years? If not, what is an appropriate rate?

4.1. Round 1 conversion rate

The status of scholarship recipients was examined to determine the conversion rate from rounds 1 and 2. For employment based training, applications were open to both individuals and employers. Individual applicants – shown under ‘A&T’ below – were required to secure an offer of an apprenticeship or traineeship with an employer. Applications from employers are shown separately.

A policy decision made during the planning of the program was that employment based pathways would be given priority over institution-based pathways. In round 1, 42 of the 100 scholarships awarded were to women intending to start an apprenticeship or traineeship. Employers were awarded 26 scholarships, thus EBT made up two thirds of the scholarships awarded.

For round 1 the status data were drawn from two sources: the results of the survey conducted in January 2016; and the claims processing database at 22 June 2016. Table 1 below presents the status of the 100 recipients in January 2016.

Five months after the scholarships had been awarded, 17 recipients had made a claim, whilst 12 had commenced their training. The majority were still interested in pursuing their scholarship, but 33 were not sure, had withdrawn or could not be contacted. Women choosing institution-based courses made up most of the claimants, with 41% (13/32) of that group making a claim compared to 15% (4/26) of employers and one of the apprentices and trainees making a claim within that category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>A&amp;T</th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claimed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still Interested</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No contact</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data at January 2016

The very low conversion rate among aspiring apprentices and trainees reflects the difficulty successful applicants faced in identifying an employer.

When the status is updated with the current data from the claims processing database, the actual number of claims at 22 June 2016 is:

- 2 by women undertaking apprenticeships or traineeships;
- 19 by women undertaking IBT; and

1 Note: One woman switched from an apprenticeship to IBT because she could not find an employer.
• 12 by employers.

This totals to 33 claims. The date for making a claim for a round 1 scholarship closes at the end of September 2016. Examination of the Training Records System (TRS) records of 2016 contract commencements indicates that three more claims may yet be made by employers.

The conversion rates for the three groups are 5% for apprentices and trainees, 59% for institution-based training and 58% for employers.

4.2. Round 2 conversion rate

In round 2, 118 scholarships were awarded, this comprised the total of all applicants who applied and were eligible. There were more IBT scholarships awarded than employment based training (EBT), irrespective of whether the employer or the would-be apprentice or trainee applied (84 IBT vs. 34 EBT).

Six months after the scholarships were awarded (from December 2015 to June 2016), the survey data and the claims processing database found the following status of recipients (see Table 2). The vast majority of scholarship recipients who had claimed their payment were institution-based recipients. When the number of those having commenced training is added to claimants, over half of the institution-based recipients have claimed or are well on their way to claiming. This cannot be said of apprentices and trainees or employers, for whom the conversion rates are much lower (3 out of 34 claimed or commenced).

Table 2. Round 2 claimant status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>A&amp;T</th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claimed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commenced</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still interested</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No contact</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data at May 2016 and claims processing database at June 2016

4.3. Round 2 claim projections

Based on the data from rounds 1 and 2, projections have been made to estimate the additional claims that will be made from July to December 2016 by successful recipients from round 2.

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2 Note: One woman switched from an apprenticeship to IBT because she could not find an employer.
For round 1, during the five months between the survey and the re-examination of the claims processing database, the following information was found:

- For apprentices and trainees, none of those who commenced training or were still interested in training at the time of the survey actually made a claim.
- For IBT, six more claims were made, i.e., all of those who had commenced training (four) and two of the seven who were still interested.
- For the employer stream of the program, 11 more claims were made, i.e. each of those who had commenced training (two) and 9 out of 16 who were still interested.

Table 3 presents the additional projected take-up for round 2. It is projected that the number of claims for round 2 will increase by 30.

**Table 3: Projected claims for round 2.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Projected</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices and trainees:</td>
<td>• One recipient who has commenced an apprenticeship</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• None of those still interested</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution-based:</td>
<td>• 14 recipients who have commenced a course</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A third of those still interested</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers:</td>
<td>• Half of those still interested</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 below summarises the take-up data presented in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. There are large differences between the conversion rates of the three groups, from a low 7% for apprentices and trainees up to 60% for IBT.

**Table 4: Summary of Conversion rate data for rounds 1 and 2 (including projected data for round 2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Round 1</th>
<th>Round 2 (projected)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total awarded</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A&amp;T</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBT</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the current rate, the 400 scholarship places will not be filled within the stipulated four years. Halfway through the program an estimated 97 scholarships will be claimed. There are 303 scholarships remaining to be claimed from future rounds. Alternative scenarios of required conversion rates for future rounds are explored below.

Scenario 1, Status quo: The ratio of the three groups applied over the first two rounds continues for the next two rounds: The required number of scholarships that would need to be awarded is 1,198.3

Scenario 2, Repeat of round 2: The ratio of the three groups is similar to that applied in round 2. The required number of scholarships that would need to be awarded is 876.

Scenario 3, Targeted approach: The Department targets applicants, only awarding scholarships to apprentices and trainees where both the employer and employee are identified. Institution based students comprise the majority (two thirds) of awarded scholarships. The required number of scholarships that would need to be awarded is approximately 519.

3 Assumes a slightly improved take-up rate of 10% for apprentices and trainees.
5. **EQ2. Does there need to be adjustments to the promotion of the scholarship program?**

In round 1, 151 applicants requested 172 scholarships (35 from 14 employers). 100 scholarships were awarded. In round 2, all 118 eligible applicants were awarded a scholarship. It is likely that the Minister's initial announcement of the scholarship program contributed to the greater level of interest in round 1 than in round 2.

In the planning stage it was decided that the program would not be promoted via the TAFEs or schools. The rationale for not promoting the scholarship program via TAFE colleges was to avoid giving TAFEs a competitive advantage over training markets. For the schools the rationale was to avoid incentivising school students to leave school to go into training.

The decline in interest from round 1 to round 2 is likely to continue without an increase in promotional efforts by the Department. At the current conversion rate the goal to award the remaining 303 scholarships will not be achieved, unless more women are encouraged to apply.

**5.1. Strategies employed in previous two rounds**

In rounds 1 and 2, the Department used the following promotional avenues:

- A Department web page about the scholarship program.
- News features on the Training WA, Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre (AWDC), Apprenticeship Office and Workplace Essentials webpages.
- An electronic direct mail was sent to Workforce Development Centres (WDC), group training organisations (GTOs) and private training providers notifying them of the scholarship program (round 1 only).
- An electronic direct mail including a promotional flyer was sent to Workforce Development Centres (WDC), GTOs and private training providers, TAFE colleges, Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) providers, Regional Development Centres and WDCs (round 2 only).
- Promotion via the program's partners: DLGC and CTF.

An internet search conducted in June 2016 for the purposes of this evaluation found the extent of the program’s web presence to be weak. Whilst the search was conducted when the application process was closed, potential applicants were still able to register an expression of interest during this time. The following searches were conducted:

- Google search for 'expanding career options for women' provided the first 15 links to the program.
- Google searches for the key words 'scholarships', 'women's scholarships' did not find the program.
- Google search for 'women in non-traditional trades' provided only one link to the program.
• Inspection of the www.dtwd.wa.gov.au website found information on the landing page but it was below the fold.

• Inspection of the Department’s Training WA web page did not find information on the landing page.

• Inspection of the DLGC website found no mention on the landing page. A website search found information under ‘women’.

• Inspection of the CTF website found no mention of the program. A website search found nothing.

• The program was not mentioned on the web page dedicated to scholarships on any of the five TAFE college websites.

• An article on the program was found on the MIGAS website in the news section.

5.2. Sources of information
The survey of round 2 scholarship recipients asked how they had found out about the scholarship program. Responses were given by 81 recipients; see Figure 1 for results.

The two most popular responses were from my training provider (either via email or the lecturer) and from friends or family. Of the other responses, 14 mentioned sources that were internet based (blue bars).

*Figure 1. Sources of information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Information</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From my training provider</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From friends or family</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the newspaper</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From my employer</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department website</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing net</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media statement from the Minister</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the Industry Training Council</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for scholarships on net</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job link / Job network provider</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3. Focus for future promotion

The evaluation found that it was easier for employers to find apprentices or trainees rather than vice versa. At 7% conversion rate for apprentices and trainees, directly promoting the scholarship to this group may have little impact. However if the potential apprentice or trainee has already identified an employer then they will be more likely to commence training and claim the scholarship.

Future promotion should focus on institution-based applicants and employers, as these two groups have the higher conversion rates.

An interrogation of TRS records of female apprentices and trainees who commenced a course on the eligible qualification list in 2016 produced a list of 404 training contracts. Of these, two were round 1 recipients and two were round 2 recipients of the scholarship. Of these training places, 183 were with TAFEs; 221 were with 41 private training providers, of which, the top ten accounted for 137 places. 215 employers provided employment for the 404 apprentices and trainees. The top ten employers accounted for 105 places. GTOs provided employment for 25 places.

Using this existing information to promote the scholarship program to the Department's existing registered training organisations (RTO) and employer contacts is a recommended avenue for focused promotion in the next rounds.

Future promotional activities should include:

- Develop website banners for the Department and TAFEs to use.
- Landing page above the fold promotion on Training WA, DTWD and TAFE websites.
- Promote to other RTOs on RTOnet and other communication channels (e.g. meetings, emails to the most likely providers).
- RTOs and Lecturers promote to students for their next course (e.g. women finishing a Certificate II who want to undertake a Certificate III).
- Promote to all Western Australian employers via training councils, GTOs, the Small Business Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and those who are existing employers of apprentices and trainees.
- Promote to those women considering their careers via Career Centre, WDCs, AWDCs and the Aboriginal Training and Employment (ATE) program.
- Promote via Commonwealth employment services / Centrelink (as people with participation requirements may benefit from the scholarship if planning to undertake an eligible course).
6. EQ3. What affects the conversion rate from a successful applicant being awarded a scholarship to then commencing and working towards completion of training? Are there any changes that can be made to improve the conversion rate?

There are positive and negative impacts on the conversion rate. From the interviews with the claimants of the scholarships, the following enabling 'success' factors emerged:

- Women who were interested in commencing training in an eligible qualification were notified of the scholarship program by their training provider. This happened in one of two ways:
  - The training provider (in all cases a TAFE college) informed the potential student of the scholarship by email once they had made contact with the training provider; this occurred four times.
  - A lecturer informed existing students about the scholarship program to encourage students to enroll in a higher level of education once they completed their existing course; this occurred six times.
- Seven of the students returned to a previous training provider.
- Only five of the 16 round 2 claimants interviewed had not been told of the scholarship by a training provider.

35 survey respondents from rounds 1 and 2 did not intend to claim their scholarship or were uncertain if they would. Figure 1 presents the reasons given (more than one reason was allowed). In addition, two respondents specifically asked for help.

*Figure 2. Barriers for not intending to claim scholarship*
The main barrier is financial support, which the scholarship program aims to address. Most of the other barriers are beyond the influence or control of the Department. The only barriers that are reasonable for the Department to address are training provider or course issues. For example:

- course chosen has prerequisites, which I don't have (2);
- availability of course (location / full time vs. part time);
- course was too hard so I left;
- course I want to do is not eligible for scholarship; and
- can't find a course I want to do.

Aspiring apprentices and trainees who were awarded the scholarship but had not yet claimed were asked what issues they had in finding an employer. The main issues were:

- being female (4);
- being mature age (3);
- have applied but have had no success (3);
- there are not many job opportunities with this qualification (3);
- economic downturn (1); and
- the course is not available in semester one (1)

In addition, five respondents specifically asked for help.

Overall there has been a very low conversion rate among aspiring apprentices and trainees. The quote below exemplifies the situation for most of the respondents:

“I am having difficulty finding anyone in the engineering industry looking for an apprentice or trainee. I contacted XXXX to be told the likelihood of a woman my age finding an employer willing to hire me is very slim. It's put me in a bit of a slump.”

Many of the issues listed above have arisen from applicants not being apprised of all the information and requirements of the courses. In addition to this, the current economic climate is putting pressure on the number of apprenticeship and traineeship commencements. Management of expectations, provision of information and encouraging applicants to do some homework before they submit their application can positively affect the conversion rate.

The evaluation found that the Department has been very responsive to addressing the issues of the recipients of the scholarship. Since the survey of round 1 recipients in January 2016, the Department has developed information sheets and frequently asked questions (FAQ) to cover many of the issues that were raised in the research. These were distributed to all recipients of round 1 scholarships and are part of the standard information provided for subsequent rounds. In addition, the team who run the program have contacted anyone who requested more information and discussed their specific issues and provided assistance. A case management approach has been

4 removed identified organisation.
adopted by the team to seek a resolution for each applicant. The time demands on the team are above and beyond what was anticipated at the beginning of the process.

Changes that can be made to improve the conversion rate are:

- Increase the number of applicants who have success factors. The Department should inform potential applicants that part of the assessment process looks at whether they have been in contact with a training provider about commencing an eligible qualification.
- Focus on apprentices and trainees who have found an employer. The Department should inform potential applicants that part of the assessment process looks at whether they have identified a potential employer.
- The Department should continue to assist with minimising the barriers facing women. The FAQ information sheet should be reassessed to ensure it is up to date regarding managing expectations and the current economic climate. The case management approach adopted by the team should be continued.
7. Conclusions

**EQ1. Is the scholarship take-up rate in rounds 1 and 2 adequate to meet the target of 400 places over four years? If not, what is an appropriate rate?**

Only 64 scholarships of the 218 scholarships have been claimed. It is projected that a further 33 scholarships may be claimed by current round 2 recipients. Round 1 closes in September 2016 (allowing for the three month probation period for apprenticeships and traineeships).

If the current performance continues over the next two years, it is projected that the Department will fund less than half of the allocated 400 scholarships (194 or 48%).

The current conversion rate varies from 7% for apprentices and trainees, 55% for employers and 60% for IBT. Achieving a more appropriate conversion rate depends on the mix of employment based and institution-based scholarships awarded.

Assuming there is no improvement in the conversion rates in future rounds and that a more targeted approach is used when selecting scholarship recipients, approximately 520 scholarships should be awarded to fulfil the remaining 303 places.

**EQ2. Does there need to be adjustments to the promotion of the scholarship program?**

In round 1 there were 151 applications for 100 places, however in round 2, all eligible applicants (118) were awarded a scholarship. If continued, the promotion of the scholarship program to date will not generate the level of interest required to award enough scholarships to fill the 400 places.

The most common sources of information for the scholarship program were via the training provider and word of mouth. The most common delivery method mentioned was via the web, often when women were searching for courses. A search for the program’s presence on the web found very little evidence of the scholarship program.

Promotion efforts need to be increased for future rounds in order to achieve the target of 520 scholarships awarded to achieve 303 training places.

**EQ3. What affects the conversion rate from a successful applicant being awarded a scholarship to then commencing and working towards completion of training? Are there any changes that can be made to improve the conversion rate?**

The evaluation identified success factors and barriers to women taking up training and claiming their scholarships. The key success factors are promotion by training providers and prior study. The key barriers are financial needs, starting work, working full time and family commitments.

5 Web search conducted in June 2016, i.e. when application process was closed.
Subsequent to round 1 the Department extended their existing FAQ and introduced separate information sheets for IBT and EBT applicants which address many of the barriers to securing a training place. The Department is already addressing many of the barriers identified in the evaluation that are within its control. The Procurement Strategy team have been advising the scholarship recipients in a case management manner.

Changes that can be made to improve the conversion rate are to prioritise:

- employment-based applicants who have identified an employer;
- institution-based applicants who have made contact with a training provider; and
- institution-based applicants who have undertaken previous training, preferably in a related course.
8. **Recommendations**

1. **In order to meet the target of 400 places in four years the Department will need to increase the number of scholarship recipient awards in future rounds.**

   Until further information is available about how strategies recommended by this evaluation will impact on the conversion rates, an initial target of 250 scholarships should be awarded for the next round. (This assumes that there will be a minimum of 250 eligible applications).

   Close monitoring of the program should be continued and the target for subsequent rounds reviewed once the application and conversion rates of the next round have been determined. There may be a requirement more than one round in 2017 to achieve the target.

2. **Increase the numbers of applications for the scholarship program.**

   a) Amend the eligibility criteria so that school students may apply. Half of the year 12 cohort (those with a birthday after 30 June) will be 18 by 31 December and hence eligible for the scholarship, even if they were not eligible when they applied. The eligibility criteria that applicants must have completed school prior to commencing study or employment should be retained to ensure the program is not incentivising students leaving school to undertake training.

   b) Develop a comprehensive communication strategy in conjunction with Communications and Marketing. The strategy needs to have greater reach than has been seen in rounds 1 and 2. Aspects for improvement that should be considered for the communication strategy are:

   - Focus on the main sources of information currently used by applicants: internet and training providers.
   - Websites under the Department's control should promote the scholarship program on the landing page and above the fold.
   - Include the TAFEs as a promotional avenue. Liaise with the Managing Directors of the TAFEs to promote via their websites and lecturers.
   - Engage as many of the Department's partners as possible. These include but are not limited to private training providers who offer the eligible courses, industry training councils, GTOs, existing employers of apprentices and trainees (via TRS records), Small Business Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce and Industry and relevant Commonwealth government agencies.
   - Promote to those women considering their careers via Career Centre, WDCs, AWDCs and ATEs.
   - Incorporate school promotion via VET coordinators into the communication strategy; this should be a priority for the campaign due to students not attending school as frequently towards the end of the school year.
c) Adopt an open-ended round approach. The Department could leave the application process open and apply industry quotas, until the required applications are processed. This will need to be supported by a continuous promotional campaign and program administration resources to be effective.

3. **Improve on the existing conversion rates by selecting those more likely to convert from being awarded a scholarship to claiming the scholarship.**

a) Based on the conversion rates seen in rounds 1 and 2, more focus should be placed on awarding institution-based scholarships rather than would-be apprentice or trainee scholarships (60% vs. 7% conversion rate). The majority of the scholarship awards should be institution-based.

b) Employment based scholarships should only be awarded where the would-be apprentice or trainee has identified an employer. The conversion rate for employer applicants is 55%; it is much easier for an employer to find an employee than vice versa. Would-be apprentices or trainees could achieve a similar conversion rate if this rule is applied. Furthermore, this will stop the program potentially setting women up to fail. If essential groundwork is undertaken prior to being awarded a scholarship, applicants will have a more realistic expectation of chances of success.

c) Award scholarships to apprentices and/or trainees who have commenced training but have not applied for the scholarship. TRS data indicate that currently there are 99 women who commenced training in 2016 (52 are apprenticeships) in eligible qualifications, who are still in their probation period, meet the age and Australian residency criteria and did not apply for the scholarship. Women who commence training could be approached by the Department to let them know about the scholarship program. Under the current program guidelines they are not eligible to apply as they have already commenced training.

It should be noted that this strategy does not align with the program's intention to grow the number of women in the sector because they are already in training. However the scholarship may increase their likelihood to complete their training and/or progress to further training.

d) Prioritise applicants with success factors over those without success factors. The two key success factors are having been in contact with a training provider and previous training in a similar priority industry area.

e) Address barriers to training in the FAQ. Since the program's inception, the Department has done much to address the barriers identified by successful recipients, from developing a FAQ to providing individual support. A review of the FAQ information sheet should be undertaken, to ensure the following messages are incorporated:

- Help is available from the Department (include contact details).
- The Career Centre can provide assistance in planning your career (include contact details).
• It is your responsibility to find an employer/training provider. You should start looking as soon as possible.

• If you have already found an employer or training provider, it will increase the chance of your application being successful.

• The current economic climate may make it difficult to access apprenticeships and traineeships.

• If wishing to do the course part time, it is best to check whether there is an approved training provider who offers the course part time before you apply.

• It is best to check whether there is an approved training provider in a location convenient to you before you apply.

f) Use data collected in the application process to determine whether the applicant has the success factors. These include having:

• previous related training;

• been in contact with approved training providers;

• identified a training provider (for IBT); or

• identified an employer (for EBT).

4. The management and administration of the program needs to be adequately resourced.

If these recommendations are adopted, it is anticipated that Procurement Strategy’s caseload will increase from approximately 118 to 250 recipients in the next round.
Appendix A: Surveys
Apprentice and Trainee Survey

1. Have you commenced your apprenticeship or traineeship with an employer?
   - Yes
   - No

2. If not, do you still intend to start an apprenticeship or traineeship before 31 December 2016?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

3. If you don’t intend to start an apprenticeship or traineeship before 31 December 2016, please tick all that apply
   - I can’t find an employer
   - I started an apprenticeship or traineeship but have since left
   - I have started working or studying elsewhere
   - Personal circumstances have changed
   - Other reasons (please provide details in box below)

   [Box for details]

4. Why are you not sure about starting an apprenticeship or traineeship? Please tick all that apply
   - I can’t find an employer
   - I started an apprenticeship or traineeship but have since left
   - I have started working or studying elsewhere
   - Personal circumstances have changed
   - Other reasons (please provide details in box below)

   [Box for details]
5. Have you found an employer for your apprenticeship/traineeship?

- Yes
- No

6. What issues have you had finding an employer? Please provide as much detail as possible

7. When do you intend to start your apprenticeship or traineeship?

- April - June 2016
- July - September 2016
- October - December 2016
- After January 2017
- Not sure

8. When do you intend to claim your scholarship funding?

- April - June 2016
- July - September 2016
- October - December 2016
- January - March 2017
- Not sure

9. How did you find out about the “Expanding Career Options for Women” scholarship?

- Media statement from the Minister
- From my employer
- From the Construction Training Fund (CTF)
- From the newspaper
- From my training provider
- From friends or family

Other (please specify)
Institution-based recipients Survey

* 1. Have you commenced training in an approved scholarship qualification?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

* 2. Do you still intend to commence training in an approved scholarship qualification before 31 December 2016?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Not sure

* 3. Why are you not intending to commence training? Please give as much information as possible.

* 4. Why are you not sure about commencing training? Please give as much information as possible.

* 5. Have you enrolled with an approved training organisation?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

* 6. Do you intend to enrol with an approved training organisation in Semester 2, 2016 (i.e. July or August)?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Not sure
7. Why have you not enrolled with an approved registered training provider?
   ☐ No approved training organisations in my area
   ☐ Courses were full
   ☐ Course hours do not suit
   ☐ Other reasons (please specify)

8. When do you intend to claim your scholarship funding?
   ☐ April - June 2016
   ☐ July - September 2016
   ☐ October - December 2016
   ☐ January - March 2017
   ☐ Not sure

9. How did you find out about the "Expanding Career Options for Women" scholarship?
   ☐ Media statement from the Minister
   ☐ From my employer
   ☐ From the Construction Training Fund (CTF)
   ☐ From the newspaper
   ☐ From my training provider
   ☐ From friends or family
   ☐ Other (please specify)
Employers Survey

1. Employer's Name:

2. Number of scholarships applied for in 2nd round (for training in 2016):
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7
   - 8

3. Have you employed any apprentices or trainees for the Expanding Career Options for Women scholarship for whom you have not yet claimed?
   - Yes
   - No

4. What are the name(s) of the apprentice(s) or trainee(s) you intend to claim for?
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.
   6.
   7.
   8.
5. If no, do you still intend to employ an apprentice or trainee before 31 December 2016?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not sure

6. If you don’t intend to employ an apprentice or trainee before 31 December 2016, please explain why
   - I can’t find a suitable person
   - The position is no longer needed
   - Other reasons (please provide details in box below)

7. When do you intend to claim the scholarship funding?
   - April - June 2016
   - July - September 2016
   - October - December 2016
   - January - March 2017
   - Not sure

8. How did you find out about the Expanding Career Options for Women Scholarship program?
   - Media statement from the Minister
   - From the Construction Training Fund (CTF)
   - From the newspaper
   - Other (please specify)
Appendix B: Discussion Guides
EVALUATION OF EXPANDING CAREER OPTIONS FOR WOMEN PROGRAM

Discussion Guide for successful recipients

Introduction

- Thanks for agreeing to participate in this evaluation
- EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION:

The Department has decided to undertake an evaluation of the program. The formative evaluation will inform how the program is run from now onwards. The evaluation will examine the experiences of the women participating in the program, such as any difficulties experienced by people awarded scholarships, as well as the Department’s communication processes.

- I would like to talk about the program, hear your thoughts on what the program aims to achieve and how it is going so far.
- This is an informal discussion. It will only take about 5-10 minutes.
- There are no right or wrong answers, generally interested in your views and opinions.
- ASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY RULES - what you say here will not be linked to you within the research unless you give permission.
- EXPLAIN THE AUDIO RECORDING – to focus on listening and not having to write everything down.

Promotion

- How did you hear about the scholarship program? PROBE FULLY
- How easy or difficult was it to find out more about the program? PROBE FULLY
- What made you decide to apply?
- What did you think of the application process? Was it straightforward or confusing?

Take up –

- How easy or difficult was it to find a training place (and employer IF APPRENTICE / TRAINEE)?
- Can you take me through the process you went through. PROBE STEP BY STEP.
- What do you think were the main barriers to finding a training place? PROBE FULLY
- Who did you turn to for help, if anybody?
- How much help did you get?
- If you could change anything about finding a training place what would it be?

Continuation

- How easy or difficult have you found it staying on the course. Why is that?
- Is there any reason you would consider stopping your training? What would that reason be? PROBE FULLY.
- Do you have any suggestions for making it easier for women to complete their training? PROBE FULLY

Finally, is there anything you would like to say about the Expanding Career Options for Women Program that I haven’t covered?

Thank you for your time.
Discussion Guide for Construction Training Fund

Introduction

• Thanks for agreeing to participate in this evaluation
• EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION:

The Department has decided to undertake an evaluation of the program. There are two parts to the evaluation, a formative stage we are conducting right now and summative stage at the end.

The formative evaluation will inform how the program is run from now onwards. The evaluation will examine the experiences of the women participating in the program, such as any difficulties experienced by people awarded scholarships, as well as the Department’s communication processes. Can the Department do anything to improve the scholarship program without increasing expenditure?

We will be speaking to you and other key stakeholders, successful applicants, RTOs and employers. The summative evaluation at the end will look at completion rates and employment outcomes.

• I would like to talk about the program, hear your thoughts on what the program aims to achieve and how it is going so far.
• This is an informal discussion. It will only take about 15-20 minutes.
• There are no right or wrong answers, generally interested in your views and opinions.
• ASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY RULES - what you say here will not be linked to you within the research unless you give permission.
• EXPLAIN THE AUDIO RECORDING – to focus on listening and not having to write everything down.

Background

• As way of background, I would like to know how your organisation got involved in the program.
• What do you understand the purpose of the program to be?
• How well do you think the program is going in meeting that purpose? PROBE FULLY

Promotion

• What do you know about how potential applicants find out about the program? PROBE FULLY
• Has your organisation had any dealings in promoting the program? PROBE FULLY
• Do you have any suggestions for how the program could be promoted in the future? PROBE FULLY
Take up

- Some successful applicants have not commenced training. Do you have any comments to make about this? PROBE FULLY
- Have you heard of any instances where this has happened? IF SO, please describe.
- Do you have any ideas about why this may be happening?
  Prompt if not raised: Finding a suitable RTO. PROBE FULLY
- Finding a suitable employer PROBE FULLY
- Do you have any suggestions for how these obstacles can be overcome by successful applicants? PROBE FULLY

Finally, is there anything you would like to say about the Expanding Career Options for Women Program that I haven’t covered?

Thank you for your time.
Evaluation of the Western Australian Group Training Program
Report written and submitted in September 2016 by:

Penelope Kennish
Senior Evaluation Officer
Performance Evaluation and Statistics

On behalf of:
Department of Training and Workforce Development
Policy Planning and Innovation
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Acronyms

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<tr>
<td>AASN</td>
<td>Australian Apprenticeship Support Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASBT</td>
<td>Aboriginal school based traineeships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTO</td>
<td>Group Training Organisation</td>
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<td>JGTP</td>
<td>Joint Group Training Program</td>
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<td>KEFL</td>
<td>Kimberley Education for Life program</td>
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<td>KGT</td>
<td>Kimberley Group Training</td>
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<tr>
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<td>School based traineeships</td>
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<td>SBA</td>
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<td>South Metropolitan Youth Link</td>
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<tr>
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1. Executive summary

1.1. Introduction

Prior to 1 July 2015 GTOs were funded by the Joint Group Training Program. This was a matched funding arrangement between the Commonwealth and state governments. In November 2014, the Commonwealth Government announced that it would cease funding to the Joint Group Training Program by 2015-16.

A new State funded program, the Western Australian Group Training program was established by the State Government and commenced on 1 July 2015. The program maintains commitment to Aboriginal people, at risk students, people with disability and school-based and remote area apprentices and trainees.

In addition, the Department also invited Kimberley Group Training to participate in a pilot program to improve completion and outcome rates in the Kimberley region. KGT proposed to increase its level of support for group training participants by reducing the number of clients per field officer from 50 to 30, in order to achieve a higher completion rate. Funding of $150,000 (ex. GST) was provided.

An evaluation was commissioned by Procurement Strategy to assess the implementation of the WAGTP funding arrangements, including the additional funds for the KGT pilot, in terms of GTO capacity to train and support apprentices and trainees.

The evaluation was conducted in May and June 2016 and collected data via in-depth interviews with two of the GTOs and a survey administered to the remaining GTOs.

1.2. Findings

EQ1. How are the new funding arrangements for group training organisations impacting on their engagement with apprentices and trainees from the program’s target groups?

Most GTOs indicated that the new funding arrangements would not change the way they support apprentices and trainees during their training. GTOs thought it was too early to say whether the new funding arrangements would affect their support after apprentices and trainees finish their training.

There was broad positive support for increasing the initial payment from 50% to 60% and introducing a mid-term payment for apprentices. GTOs were more positive than negative about the introduction of an outcomes payment.

However the drop in overall funding available to GTOs, due to the redistribution of target groups funded because of the Commonwealth’s withdrawal, has meant that some GTOs have had to downsize their operations.
EQ2. **What effect is the additional funding for Kimberley Group Training having on its level of support for apprentices and trainees?**

There was positive feedback from all participants regarding the support provided by KGT to its apprentices, trainees, host employers, TAFE and schools. Without the additional funding, staff would have been retrenched, the ratio of clients to field officer would not have been kept low and the level of support would have dropped. KGT management indicated that it suspects the pilot will not have the desired effect on completion rates and outcomes because of the economic downturn in the Kimberley.

KGT management identified that of all the different stages of the contract, commencement has the biggest influence on outcomes. It would like to investigate strategies to improve apprentice and trainee selection.

EQ3. **Are there any early indicators of improved commencements and outcomes for apprentices and trainees employed by Kimberley Group Training or other group training organisations (e.g. completions and transitions, reduced absenteeism and attrition, views of students and employers)?**

There are favourable signs for commencements at WAGTP employers in the target groups compared to the rest of the WA. Traineeship commencements were similar in 2015-16 compared to 2014-15 despite a decrease among other employers (down 18%); Aboriginal apprenticeships at WAGTP GTOs have declined less than among other employers (down 11% compared to 27%).

For completions and transitions indicators it is too early to assess whether there are any improvements in performance. The data will start to be available in early 2017.

EQ4. **Can early lessons be used to inform how the current funding model can be improved to get better outcomes?**

There are opportunities for the Department to support GTOs in proof of eligibility for some payments and to improve GTO’s understanding of WAGTP, which will in turn, encourage GTOs to report outcomes for their apprentices and trainees.
1.3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Department:

1. use face-to-face meetings to promote and explain the WAGTP funding model, with scenarios to demonstrate how the payments compare favourably to those in JGTP;

2. look for opportunities where it can assist in establishing proof of eligibility for outcomes payments, such as liaising with employers or tracking further VET training;

3. continue to provide the pilot funding for KGT; and

4. discuss with KGT management potential alternative initiatives that will provide improved outcomes.
2. Introduction

The Joint Group Training Program provided incentives for group training organisations to employ apprentices and trainees from key under-represented groups and in skills shortage occupations. The JGTP provided funding on an individual basis, with 50 per cent being paid upon the commencement of an apprenticeship/traineeship and 50 per cent upon completion. The JGTP traditionally received around $3 million in Commonwealth funding and a matched contribution from the State Government, for a total budget of around $6 million. The JGTP ceased on 30 June 2015 as the Commonwealth withdrew its funding contribution to the program.

The State Government decided it would maintain its contribution but had to rationalise the number of priority groups supported. A new State funded program, the Western Australian Group Training program, commenced on 1 July 2015.

The new funding model includes: an increase in commencement payments from 50 per cent to 60 per cent; the introduction of mid-term payments for apprentices; the introduction of a 20 per cent outcome payment if the student completes the training contract; and/or a 20 per cent payment if the student gains on-going employment.

The program maintained a commitment to Aboriginal people, at risk students, people with disability, school-based and regional and remote area apprentices and trainees.

The objectives of the WAGTP are to:

- improve outcomes of apprentices and trainees in State Priority Target Groups including completions;
- increase school based arrangements, with emphasis on completions and outcomes; and
- achieve sustained employment outcomes, either before or after completion, in a current role or new job, or transitioning from a traineeship to an apprenticeship.

In total 19 GTOs participated in the 2015-16 WAGTP. Of these, 17 operate in the metropolitan area, including 5 that operate in metropolitan and regional locations. Kimberley Group Training Inc. and ATC Work Smart operate only in regional Western Australia. There are five GTOs registered in the State that did not participate in the 2015-16 WAGTP.

In addition, the Department also invited KGT to participate in a pilot program to improve completion and outcome rates in the Kimberley region. KGT proposed to increase its level of support for group training participants by reducing the number of clients per field officer from 50 to 30, in order to achieve a higher completion rate. Funding of $150,000 (ex. GST) was provided.
2.1. Evaluation purpose

The evaluation seeks in the short term to assess the implementation of the WAGTP funding arrangements, including the additional funds for the KGT pilot, in terms of GTO capacity to train and support apprentices and trainees. The purpose is not to assess the appropriateness of the program's target groups.

In the longer term, the objective will be to measure training outcomes—including completion rates and employment transitions—and identify opportunities for improving outcomes for target groups with the available funding.

The findings of the evaluation in the short term will be used to inform funding arrangements for the 2016-17 financial year.

2.2. Key evaluation questions

The evaluation questions for the two stages of the evaluation are as follows:

Short term:
1. How are the new funding arrangements for group training organisations impacting on their engagement with apprentices and trainees from the program's target groups?
2. What effect is the additional funding for Kimberley Group Training having on its level of support for apprentices and trainees?
3. Are there any early indicators of improved commencements and outcomes for apprentices and trainees employed by Kimberley Group Training or other group training organisations (e.g. completions and transitions, reduced absenteeism and attrition, views of students and employers)?
4. Can early lessons be used to inform how the current funding model can be improved to get better outcomes?

Longer term:
5. Have completion rates improved for apprentices and trainees in the WAGTP compared with the JGTP?

2.3. Reporting of evaluation findings

This document reports the findings for the formative evaluation questions only.

Reporting for the summative phase of the evaluation will occur once sufficient data on training and employment completion rates and outcomes have been collected.
3. Methodology

3.1. Qualitative research

A series of interviews were conducted during visits to Broome, Kununurra and Geraldton in May 2016.

In the Kimberley, staff of KGT, their apprentices and trainees, host employers, VET staff at the high schools and staff at a co-located Australian Apprenticeship Support Network provider were interviewed.

In Geraldton, staff of ATC Midwest, their apprentices and trainees, host employers, and VET staff at the high school and regional office were interviewed.

The numbers of each group interviewed are as follows:
- 12 staff;
- 8 host employers;
- 7 apprentices;
- 6 trainees;
- 4 Department of Education VET staff; and
- 1 AASN.

Four discussion guides were developed for GTO staff, host employers and stakeholders, apprentices and trainees, and Department of Education staff. They are provided in Appendix B.

3.2. Quantitative research

Once the qualitative stage was completed, two surveys were developed and administered, one to participants and the other to non-participants of the WAGTP. The surveys were launched via Survey Monkey on 24 May 2016 and closed on 7 June 2016. The participants’ survey was not sent to KGT or ATC Midwest because they contributed via the qualitative research.

Both groups were sent an email invitation that contained a link to an online survey. Of the 17 participants of the WAGTP, 14 completed the survey and contributed to the evaluation; none of the non-participants completed the survey (one partial complete). Both surveys are provided in Appendix A.
4. EQ1. How are the new funding arrangements for group training organisations impacting on their engagement with apprentices and trainees from the program’s target groups?

During the evaluation the participating GTOs referred to a decrease in funding. For some of the comments made in the WAGTP participants’ survey it is not clear what timeframe the GTOs are referencing. They are not necessarily comparing WAGTP to JGTP, but to a longer timeframe.

4.1. Overall impressions of the impact of the new funding model

The WAGTP participants’ survey asked about the impact of the new funding model on the recruitment and support of apprentices and trainees: *Q. How has the new funding model changed your organisation’s ability to:*

- Attract apprentices & trainees in the target groups?
- Support apprentices & trainees during their training?
- Support apprentices & trainees after their training?

Results from the 14 GTOs who responded to the question are presented in Figure 1 below.

*Figure 1. Impact of changes in the funding model*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attract A&amp;Ts in the target groups</th>
<th>Support A&amp;Ts during training</th>
<th>Support A&amp;Ts after their training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too early to say</td>
<td>No Change</td>
<td>Declined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.1. Impact on ability to attract apprentices & trainees in the target groups

Eight GTOs rated the new funding model as having decreased their ability to attract apprentices and trainees, five rated no change and one rated the funding model as having improved their ability to attract apprentices and trainees.
The GTO that reported an improvement stated that it now provided certainty to Aboriginal students. Those who reported no change stated:

- they still have issues getting host employers;
- the money can be used to “offset the risk” of taking on trainees in the target groups;
- the money is not enough to offset the cost of the systems required to pursue outcomes for students; and
- the money is not sufficient to impact on set-up costs of an apprenticeship or traineeship.

The last two issues are pre-existing for these GTOs. They have struggled to attract the WAGTP target groups in the past.

Those who stated their ability to support apprentices and trainees had declined made the following comments:

- the WAGTP priority groups no longer cover the GTO’s cohort so it is not getting as much funding as in previous years (six of the eight GTOs made this comment);
- the overall funding is down;
- loss of funding has impacted on the resources used for recruitment;
- the GTO’s charge-out rates have had to increase to cover loss of funding, which has not helped increase employers’ intent to hire; and
- the market downturn has impacted on take-up of apprentices and trainees.

4.1.2. Impact on ability to support apprentices & trainees during their training

The GTOs were slightly more positive about the impact the new funding has had on their ability to support apprentices and trainees during training. Two GTOs rated the impact as having improved their ability to support; one commented that it helps fund Aboriginal support at their GTO.

Seven GTOs indicated that there had been no change. These GTOs commented that they are still providing the best possible support and that whilst the up-front funding has improved the support they can provide, there has not been an increase in funding overall.

There were five GTOs that indicated their level of support had declined. They commented that the economic downturn and reduced funding hinders their ability to support apprentices and trainees, and that less funding equates to less support staff. One GTO indicated that the funding was less than it was four years ago (beyond the scope of this question).

4.1.3. Impact on ability to support apprentices & trainees after their training

The most positive reaction was for the impact the funding model has had on the GTOs’ ability to support apprentices and trainees after their training. The GTO that indicated it had improved its ability to support apprentices and trainees after their training stated that the new funding model enables them to provide post placement support and mentoring.
Five GTOs indicated that the new funding model would make no difference; of these, three chose to make a comment. One GTO had only one apprentice in the new target groups, another indicated that it was maintaining the existing successful approach, and the third indicated that the funding model was not sufficient to compensate/encourage post training support.

Only one GTO indicated a decline in its post training support; because of the decline in funding overall, this GTO has had to make its mentor redundant. It is not clear over what timeframe the GTO is referring, nor does the GTO indicate whether it is the economic downturn or a change in WAGTP’s target groups (or both) that has reduced funding.

In discussions with KGT, management did not think that the new funding model (not including the KGT pilot) affected its ability to attract apprentices and trainees, or to support them during or after training. The target groups of WAGTP very much align with its existing client base and KGT’s level of support had not changed.

ATC Midwest management also indicated that the new funding model had not impacted on the level of support it provides its clients. However it felt that the change in target groups did affect its ability to attract apprentices and trainees. The WAGTP funds are now focused on school based students, at-risk Aboriginal students, remote and regional, people with disability, and Aboriginal apprentices and trainees, which means ATC Midwest has to shift its efforts into recruiting in these target groups.

4.2. Reaction to specific aspects of the new funding model

GTOs were asked about four specific features of the new funding model. The reaction to the specific aspects of the funding model was much more positive than their overall impressions of it, as shown in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2. Reaction to specific aspects of the funding model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased up-front payment from 50% to 60%</th>
<th>Mid-term payment for apprentices</th>
<th>Reduction in completion payment &amp; Intro of outcome payment</th>
<th>Outcome payment paid whether training completed or not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Opinion | For the better | For the worse

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For the better | For the worse
Most GTOs thought the increase in the upfront payment was for the better. Regarding the mid-term payments for apprentices, responses were evenly split between “for the better” and “no opinion” (presumably because the GTO did not have apprentices). There were negative opinions about the reduction of the completion payment and the introduction of an outcome payment, but these were in the minority.

Although there was no comments section for this question, at the end of the survey one GTO made a comment about the outcome payment being for the worse because it is “…designed to make payments to GTOs that are not performing….properly”.

Both KGT and ATC Midwest thought that the shift to increased up-front payments and the mid-term payment for apprentices were positive changes for WAGTP. They were also positive about the introduction of an outcome payment. However, staff at both GTOs mentioned that the new payment structure would reward GTOs that do not do their job properly, and that the new payment structure may encourage unethical GTOs to sign up anyone.
5. **EQ2. What effect is the additional funding for Kimberley Group Training having on its level of support for apprentices and trainees?**

5.1. **Introduction to KGT**

KGT operates throughout the Kimberley, with offices in Kununurra and Broome. At the time of the evaluation each office had three field officers. KGT is well established in the community in Kununurra. In Broome, however, the field officers talked of ‘building the business’, especially through school based apprentices and trainees. The Broome office services Derby, Fitzroy Crossing and other remote towns.

Kununurra District High School has a long established school based traineeship program, Kimberley Education for Life, which the school is keen to point out is not just another engagement program aimed at keeping the students busy. KGT organise the work placements for the KEFL program. Broome Senior High School had six school based trainees with KGT in 2016 to date. KGT also connect with the VET coordinators in the Aboriginal Communities and at St Mary’s College, the local Catholic college.

KGT staff and management described the difficult current economic conditions in the Kimberley. Businesses are closing down and everyone is “feeling the pinch”. The evaluation was conducted just before the high season in the Kimberley, so there was some optimism that tourism would bring trade into the Kimberley, but overall there was the feeling that there the next two or three years will be difficult. A number of potential traineeships with big businesses and government agencies have not started due to retrenchment of existing staff or lack of demand for services.

5.2. **KGT Pilot**

The pilot provided KGT with an additional $150,000 for 2015-16, with two further one-year options, to cover the cost of increased support for apprentices and trainees. This was to be achieved by reducing the number of apprentices or trainees per field officer from 50:1 down to 30:1. KGT anticipated improvements in the completion rates of its trainees by 10 percentage points from 40% to 50%, and from less than 25% to 50% for its apprentices. These figures include those who complete with employers other than KGT. At the time of the evaluation, there were six field officers for 108 apprentices and trainees (18:1 ratio). One field officer left KGT during the evaluation (increasing the ratio to 22:1).

5.3. **Support provided by KGT field officers**

In total 11 apprentices and trainees, seven host employers and two schools were interviewed for the evaluation. All research participants (except one trainee) had a current working relationship with KGT. They reported extremely high levels of support provided by the KGT field officers. The apprentices and trainees said they had been helped in a variety of ways, and not just relating to their work or study. One trainee described how their field officer had found them accommodation in town rather than out in the community, saving them from transportation issues and distractions from

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1 Data obtained from the Department's Training Records System 19/04/2016.
family and friends. A mental health counsellor was organised for a trainee who was having work/life problems. Another simply stated that they would not have a copy of their birth certificate if it was not for their KGT field officer.

KGT’s provision of work support ranges from lifts to the workplace or TAFE, uniforms for work, organising loans for tools and help completing the paperwork. One apprentice has been able to do his apprenticeship entirely because the KGT field officer found and organised enrolment in an interstate training provider, because the course is no longer offered in WA. KGT has also organised for another trainee to attend a leadership course in Canberra.

From host employers’ perspectives, the support provided by KGT field officers has made employing an apprentice much easier (“with them handling the paperwork”) than if they had employed the apprentices and trainees directly. One host employer wondered ‘why wouldn’t everyone use them?’ A new host employer exclaimed ‘excellent, wow!’ when asked for their opinion of the field officer.

“KGT is designed to support the apprentices and trainees, so they can do it much better than we can”. (host employer)

The school staff appreciated working with KGT because the field officers help share the workload of transporting students to workplaces and monitoring the wellbeing of the students.

The KGT field officers were found to be focused on their apprentices and trainees, trying to help them sort out their issues, whether work-related or not. They all appeared to understand that a holistic approach is required with their apprentices and trainees.

“Our role is to get them to a place where they are independent, but that isn’t at the start”. (KGT field officer)

KGT field officers appear to understand that getting the right person for the position was very important for success, which is demonstrated by completion of the training contract and gaining employment. Some field officers talked of employers encouraging a quick sign up of an apprentice or trainee which sometimes did not work out because it was rushed. One field officer described the pre-employment programs KGT has run in the past as being good for assessing how potential apprentices and trainees ‘really are’ (in terms of work readiness), and for getting them job-ready. The hospitality pre-employment program was also effective in matching employers to aspiring trainees.

The KGT team is focused on post course outcomes including employment, rather than training for training’s sake.

The standard of support provided by the field officers according to the apprentices and trainees interviewed was very high. Where possible, participants were asked if there had been a change in the standard of support they receive. Those who had been with KGT for more than one or two years were able to compare current and past levels of support. None reported a change to the level of support (i.e. ‘it has always been good’).
5.4.  KGT’s self-assessment of the pilot

When reflecting on the aims of the KGT pilot and what it has achieved so far, KGT management thought the pilot would not deliver the results it was aiming for, and that interim, short-term targets should have been set. KGT is operating below the target ratio of 30:1 because of the downturn in commencements due to the economy, and the expected improvement in completions is not foreseeable.

For KGT management, the additional funding has meant that it has been able to keep staff that would otherwise have been retrenched. Financial data for 2015-16 show a shortfall of $200,000 between budgeted and actual WAGTP activity (taking into account $150,000 for the pilot). The impact of the economic downturn is clear.

KGT management identified that of all the different stages of the contract, commencement has the biggest influence on outcomes. The recruitment of the right person for the right job was crucial to successful outcomes. Management proposed that any future additional funding would be better spent on improving recruitment practices, so that the right people are chosen for the right positions from the very start.

KGT management has identified pre-employment programs as key to signing up the right people. One of the issues in the Kimberley is that many potential apprentices and trainees are not job-ready. A pre-employment program enables KGT to develop skills and a good work ethic, whilst giving the client a taste for the industry and exposure to potential employers. In 2014 KGT opened a skills centre in Kununurra so that it could run pre-employment programs from its premises. Currently there is no funding available to KGT to run any pre-employment courses from its premises.

5.5.  Comparison to ATC Midwest recruitment practices

The evaluation included data collection from the only other non-metropolitan GTO, ATC Midwest. It was observed that the recruitment practices of ATC Midwest were notably different from those at KGT. At KGT the field officers are responsible for recruiting apprentices and trainees as well as developing relationships with employers. They do this in addition to their support duties. At ATC Midwest a recruitment officer is solely responsible for identifying potential apprentices and trainees and matching them to an appropriate position. It is only once the apprenticeship contract has been signed that the field officer takes on support duties. The apprentice or trainee to field officer ratio at ATC Midwest is higher than KGT at 35:1.\(^2\) ATC Midwest staff and management believe that their approach to recruitment is one of their strengths, and as such KGT should consider adopting a similar model.

\(^2\) Data obtained from the Department's Training Records System 19/04/2016.
6. EQ3. Are there any early indicators of improved commencements and outcomes for apprentices and trainees employed by Kimberley Group Training or other group training organisations (e.g. completions and transitions, reduced absenteeism and attrition, views of students and employers)?

Commencements and attrition were examined to determine if there has been an improvement in performance. It is too early to examine completions and outcomes. Completion and outcomes data for trainees including school based trainees commencing in 2015-16 on one-year courses will start to become available in 2017. For apprentices on longer courses the completion and outcomes data will not be available for several years.

6.1. KGT indicators

6.1.1. Attrition data

Attrition data for the last five available 6-month periods\(^3\) are shown in Figure 3 below. Attrition is defined here as the termination of a training contract within 90 days. It should be noted that there are very small numbers of contracts for KGT in each 6-month period (40 to 90), so the data are quite volatile.

Over the two and a half years, the average attrition rate for KGT has been 18%. For apprentices and trainees with other employers in the Kimberley the average attrition rate is lower at 11% and is also decreasing. In January to June the difference between the attrition rate at KGT and for the rest of the Kimberley was statistically significantly different\(^4\).

Figure 3. Attrition data for 6 month periods for KGT and the rest of the Kimberley

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\[^3\] Attrition data is not available until 3 months after end of reported period to allow for withdrawal and cancellation data to be in TRS.

\[^4\] Z score test conducted at a 95% confidence level
6.1.2. Absenteeism

KGT management had not noticed any changes in the absentee rates of its trainees or apprentices as a result of the introduction of WAGTP or the pilot.

6.1.3. Commencements

Table 1 presents the commencement data for the past three years. The economic downturn the Kimberley is currently experiencing is reflected in the drop in the overall number of commencements from 2014-15 to 2015-16. This decrease is mainly seen in the Aboriginal trainee data.

**Table 1. Commencement data for last three years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2013-14</th>
<th>FY 2014-15</th>
<th>FY 2015-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal trainees</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non- Aboriginal trainees</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School based trainees</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal apprentices</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aboriginal apprentices</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All apprentices and trainees</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2. Indicators for WAGTP GTOs

6.2.1. Attrition

Attrition data for the last five available 6-month periods are shown in Figure 4 below for apprenticeships and traineeships in the WAGTP target groups with employers currently in the WAGTP compared to all other employers in WA.

**Figure 4. Attrition data for 6 month periods**

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5 Attrition data is not available until 3 months after end of reported period to allow for withdrawal and cancellation data to be in TRS.
As was the case for KGT, there has been a decline in attrition levels over the last two and a half years for both groups shown. The average attrition rate for GTOs currently in the WAGTP is 13% compared to 9% for all other employers.

6.2.2. Absenteeism

The GTOs that participated in the survey were not explicitly asked about how the new funding model has affected absentee rates. None of the students or employers who participated in the qualitative research indicated any changes to absentee rates.

6.2.3. Commencements – comparison of WAGTP target groups at participating GTOs and all other apprentices

Commencements of apprentices and trainees in the WAGTP target groups at the participating GTOs have been compared to commencements of apprentices and trainees in the WAGTP target groups at other employers. The data for the full 12 months of the last three financial years are presented in tables 2, 3 and 4 below.

Table 2. Commencement data for last three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commencements</th>
<th>FY 2013-14</th>
<th>FY 2014-15</th>
<th>FY 2015-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainees in WAGTP target groups at WAGTP GTOs</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainees in WAGTP target groups at other employers</td>
<td>6360</td>
<td>5701</td>
<td>4676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices in WAGTP target group at WAGTP GTOs</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices in WAGTP target group at other employers</td>
<td>2167</td>
<td>2042</td>
<td>1827</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For apprentices and trainees in both groups there have been declines in commencements over the three year period.

- Trainee commencements in the WAGTP target groups at the WAGTP GTOs have declined from 2013-14 to 2015-16 by 17%, and by 0.3% from 2014-15 to 2015-16. This compares favourably to the decline in the WAGTP target groups at all other employers: 26% decline from 2013-14 to 2015-16 and 18% decline from 2014-15 to 2015-16.

- Apprentice commencements in the WAGTP target groups at the WAGTP GTOs have declined more than apprentices in the WAGTP target groups at all other employers: 36% compared to 16% from 2013-14 to 2015-16 and 25% and 11% from 2014-15 to 2015-16

Table 3. Aboriginal commencement data for last three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aboriginal commencements</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainees at WAGTP GTOs</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other trainees</td>
<td>1019</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices at WAGTP GTOs</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other apprentices</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aboriginal trainee commencements at GTOs participating in WAGTP declined more from 2014-15 to 2015-16 (-13.2%) than non-WAGTP Aboriginal trainee commencements (-0.7%). From 2013-14 to 2015-16 Aboriginal trainee commencements at GTOs participating in WAGTP declined more (-21.6%) than non-WAGTP Aboriginal trainee commencements (-17.7%).

WAGTP Aboriginal apprentice commencements declined less from 2013-14 to 2015-16 (-11.3%) than non-WAGTP Aboriginal apprentice commencements (-27.7%).

Table 4. School based commencement data for last three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School based commencements</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAGTP / JGTP trainees</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other trainees</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAGTP / JGTP apprentices</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other apprentices</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-WAGTP school based trainee commencements increased more from 2014-15 to 2015-16 (38.3%) than WAGTP SBT commencements (15.5%). Commencements have recovered in 2015-16 after a drop the previous year.

Commencements are holding steady for non-WAGTP SBAs, but have declined by 87% from 2013-14 to 2015-16 for WAGTP SBAs.

It should be noted that the half-year cohort influences the data presented in Table 4. In 2013-14, the population of years 11 and 12 was reduced to approximately one and a half cohorts. In 2014-15, the population was reduced to one and a half cohorts for six months of the year.

Around 80% of the growth in non-WAGTP school based commencements in the past 12 months has come from 10 employers.
7. EQ4. Can early lessons be used to inform how the current funding model can be improved to get better outcomes?

Throughout the evaluation, opportunities for improving the current funding model to obtain better outcomes were examined, and participants in the research were asked for suggestions for improving the program.

7.1. Problems proving eligibility for pay

Anecdotally a small number of GTOs had identified problems with proving eligibility for payments. To determine the extent of this issue a question was added to the survey: Q. Have you had any issues obtaining the proof required for the following payments? Aboriginal student at risk status, employment outcomes and any other training outcomes.

Four GTOs identified issues when obtaining proof of Aboriginal student-at-risk status from schools. Only one provided more information about the issue, stating that schools are reluctant to deem students at-risk.

Four GTOs identified issues obtaining proof of employment outcomes status. These GTOs mentioned the following issues with employers:

- “are reluctant to provide documentation in case they are backed into a corner with industrial requirements”;
- “not happy to state they intend to provide at least 6 months of employment, they feel that this could trap them”;
- “felt that it breached the privacy of individual to provide information on the employment arrangement with the ex-trainee unless that trainee agreed”; and
- “…is only an issue when trying to access personal data after an apprentice is no longer in our employment”.

Three GTOs identified issues obtaining proof of other training outcomes. Only one elaborated on the issue: “if the participants take up further training after they [finish] with us we don’t have any follow up with them”.

One GTO made the comment, “for the $ involved, the effort to follow up has to be questioned”.

The extent of these issues is not widespread, but the Department should consider what it can do to help to establish proof of eligibility for payments. This may involve intervening with employers to establish intent to employ for six months, direct action at the end of six months to determine who is still employed or routinely running reports to determine if any apprentices or trainees who did not complete their training have commenced in new VET accredited course within two months.
7.2. Outcomes reporting

One of the aims of the WAGTP is to achieve sustained employment outcomes, either before or after completion, in a current role or new job, or by transitioning from a traineeship to an apprenticeship. To encourage GTOs to achieve sustained outcomes for their clients the WAGTP introduced employment and other outcomes payments.

There are two considerations regarding outcomes reporting: one is the tracking of clients’ outcomes and the other is GTOs making an effort to achieve better outcomes for their clients.

The Department relies on GTOs to track outcomes for their clients. There is no other method for outcomes data collection currently in place. It is therefore in the Department’s interest to strongly encourage GTOs to collect outcomes data. The evaluation found that there were some issues regarding the new payment structure, and that GTOs had not fully understood all aspects of the new payment structure.

- Both KGT and ATC Midwest did not claim payments for Aboriginal students at educational risk. Examination of payments indicates that only SMYL has received payments for this target group. Discussion with the VET staff involved in the research indicated that the schools would be open to supporting GTOs who wished to claim this payment.

- Both KGT and ATC Midwest indicated that they had not considered how they would identify when mid-term payments for apprentices in the target groups were due.

- There was a misconception that the employment outcome payment could only be paid once the client had worked in their job for six months. In fact a signed letter by the employer that they intend to employ the client for six months (all other things being equal) is sufficient.

The last issue in this list was resolved prior to the start of the evaluation, but along with the other issues, it indicates that, as with any new system, there are teething issues.

Further promotion of the WAGTP payment schedule should be included in face-to-face meetings between the Department and participating GTOs. Analysis of the payment structure found there is only one scenario where the sum of the payments is less under the WAGTP than the JGTP for the target groups identified; that is where a trainee completes the training contract and does not obtain a job within two months or the outcome is unknown. This scenario is shown in italics in Table 5 below.

Departmental assistance in establishing proof of eligibility for payment and promotion of the funds available for tracking outcomes other than completion is integral to outcomes reporting by GTOs.
Table 5: Comparison of WAGTP and JGTP payment scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding model</th>
<th>WAGTP</th>
<th>JGTP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apprentices</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete and gets a job</td>
<td>120%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete, no known outcome</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete (less than half way), who gets a job</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete (less than half way), who commences a VET course</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete (less than half way), no known outcome</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete (more than half way), who gets a job</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete (more than half way), who commences a VET course</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete (more than half way), no known outcome</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trainees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete and gets a job</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete, no known outcome</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete, who gets a job</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete, who commences a VET course</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t complete, no known outcome</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3. Suggestions by participants in the evaluation

The research gathered the following ideas from participants in the research. The feasibility of the suggestions has not been assessed for the evaluation. It should be remembered that the assessment of the appropriateness of the program’s target groups in WAGTP was out of scope of the evaluation. The suggestions have been grouped into like themes where possible.

Additional funding

- Discretionary funding for genuine pilot projects that GTOs can apply for.
- There should be more funding in general.
- More funding for remote clients.
- Funding to pay the wages of ASBTs.
- Funding to cover a lot of the activities undertake for free, i.e. screening and supporting potential clients.
- Financial support for employers who keep on apprentices during the tough quiet times.
- More funds to cover the increased reporting requirements.
- To assist in the challenge of the high attrition rate in the first six months we need to provide an increased support structure in that period - therefore, provide a heavier weighting toward the commencement. (WAGTP has already increased the initial payment from 50% to 60%).
**Additional Support**
- More support for training in remote communities.
- More support for mental health for GTO staff and clients.
- A mentoring program for graduating apprentices entering industry.

**Other suggestions**
- Change the name of GTOs to better reflect the mentoring and pastoral support they provide their clients.
- More pre-employment programs.
- Better understanding of what market factors affect our client’s ability to take on apprentices.
- Do away with the “other” outcome payments which to me are designed to make payments to GTO’s that are not performing their function properly.
- Remove the current probationary period clause as funding should be based on commencement.
- First year apprentices and trainees should be only employed through GTC through partnership control from the Apprenticeship Office to improve the quality of commencements and address attrition through effective mentoring and pastoral care.

**Changes to the target groups:**
- More support for females in non-traditional trades. (The Expanding Career Options for Women scholarship program provides $2,000 funding to employers of female apprentices and trainees).
- Mature age needs to be on the priority list given the ageing population.
- WAGTP should target small businesses or regional small businesses only.
- Include skills shortage for all regions.
- Provide a heavier weighting to the traditional apprentice/trainee occupations.
8. Conclusions

EQ1. How are the new funding arrangements for group training organisations impacting on their engagement with apprentices and trainees from the program’s target groups?

Most GTOs indicated that the new funding arrangements would not change the way they support apprentices and trainees during their training, though some thought it would have a negative impact. Most GTOs thought it was too early to say whether the new funding arrangements would affect their support after apprentices and trainees finish their training.

That being said, when asked about the specific aspects of the new funding arrangement there was broad positive support for increasing the initial payment from 50% to 60% and introducing a mid-term payment for apprentices. GTOs were more positive than negative about the introduction of an outcomes payment, but opinion was split on the reduction of the completion payment to pay for the outcomes payment.

The initial overall reaction by most GTOs to the WAGTP is mostly negative. For the majority of GTOs the removal of some of the JGTP target groups means the loss of significant amounts of funding and a reduction in the size of their operations. Those who tend to see the new funding arrangement as positive are the ones who are operating with large proportions of Aboriginal or school based clients. Whilst some GTOs recognise that they must change their focus to reflect the new target groups, most indicated that the funding is not relevant for them as they currently operate and the new funding arrangements do not help them attract apprentices and trainees.

EQ2. What effect is the additional funding for Kimberley Group Training having on its level of support for apprentices and trainees?

There was positive feedback from all participants regarding the support provided by KGT to its apprentices, trainees, host employers, TAFE and schools.

It was not possible to determine whether there had been an increase in support, because most of the participants had not been with KGT for long enough to assess a change in the level of support, or if they had, they said the level of support had always been high. However, without the additional funding staff would have been retrenched and the ratio of client to field officer would not have been kept low and the level of support would have dropped.

KGT management indicated that it thinks that the pilot will not have the desired effect on completion rates and outcomes because of the economic downturn in the Kimberley. They are operating at a 22:1 ratio of clients per field officer (at June 2016) and an improvement in completion rates is not foreseeable. The pilot funding has allowed staff to stay that would otherwise be retrenched. The financial data for 2015-16 indicate a shortfall of $200,000 between budgeted and actual WAGTP activity.
KGT management identified that of all the different stages of the contract, commencement has the biggest influence on outcomes. It would like to investigate strategies to improve apprentice and trainee selection.

Without the additional pilot funds from the Department the financial situation of KGT is dire, and there is a real prospect of not having a GTO operating in the Kimberley. The continuation of the pilot funding for another year will provide KGT the opportunity to explore other avenues to improve outcomes.

**EQ3. Are there any early indicators of improved commencements and outcomes for apprentices and trainees employed by Kimberley Group Training or other group training organisations (e.g. completions and transitions, reduced absenteeism and attrition, views of students and employers)?**

There are favourable signs for commencements at WAGTP in the target groups compared to the rest of the WA. Specifically:

- There has been a decline in commencements among trainees who are in one of WAGTP target groups for all employers, however for commencements at a WAGTP GTO the decline has not been as steep as was among those elsewhere.
- WAGTP Aboriginal apprentice commencements have declined less than non-WAGTP Aboriginal apprentice commencements.

There are no early signs of improvement in attrition or absenteeism at KGT or the other GTOs.

For completions and transitions indicators it is too early to assess whether there are any improvements in performance. The earliest analysis of completions will be for one year traineeships; this will start to be available in early 2017. Completions data for apprenticeships will not be available until late 2018.

**EQ4. Can early lessons be used to inform how the current funding model can be improved to get better outcomes?**

The evaluation found a lack of clarity around some aspects of the new funding model, which can be expected with the introduction of a new funding model.

The GTOs are integral to the Department’s move to outcomes based reporting, as they are the collectors of the outcomes data, and potentially capable of creating positive outcomes for their clients.

There are opportunities for the Department to support GTOs in proof of eligibility for some payments and to improve GTO’s understanding of WAGTP, which will in turn, encourage GTOs to report outcomes for their apprentices and trainees.
8.1. Current climate for GTOs

Over two years the funding available for GTOs has halved from $6m to $3m. The Western Australian economic downturn has negatively affected host employers’ intention to take on apprentices and trainees. This, coupled with a decline in the overall level of funding for GTOs through the withdrawal of some target groups has made the current climate very difficult and this is seen in the findings and comments made by GTOs throughout the evaluation.

Both of the GTOs visited are losing money annually; other GTOs commented on loss of funds in the survey.

There was also a belief among two of the GTOs that SMYL gets preferential funding from the Department that is not available to others.

The current situation is not sustainable. Some GTOs are hypothesising that there will not be GTOs in the future, and the financial situation of some GTOs makes this a very real possibility. The Department will need to consider its policy for the long-term future of GTOs.

9. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Department:

1. use face-to-face meetings to promote and explain the WAGTP funding model, with scenarios to demonstrate how the payments compare favourably to those in JGTP;

2. look for opportunities where it can assist in establishing proof of eligibility for payment, this may include intervening where employers are reluctant to commit to writing their intent to employ an ex-client for 6 months, direct action at the end of 6 months to determine who is still employed or in running reports to track ex-clients who move to other VET courses;

3. continue to provide the pilot funding KGT; and

4. discuss with KGT management potential alternative initiatives that will provide improved outcomes. These include increasing resources at the recruitment stage, and potentially facilitating KGT gaining access to other GTOs, such as ATC Midwest, where a different staffing model is in operation.
Appendix A: Discussion Guides
Discussion Guide for GTOs (Midwest Training Group & Kimberley Group Training additional section in blue)
Evaluation of WA Group Training Program (inc. KGT pilot)

Introduction

• Thanks for agreeing to participate in this evaluation
• EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION:

The Department has decided to undertake an evaluation of the program. There are two parts to the evaluation, a formative stage we are conducting right now and summative stage at the end. The formative evaluation will inform how the program is run from now onwards.

In the short term the evaluation aims to get a better understanding how the changes in the funding arrangements are impacting upon your capacity to train and support your apprentices and trainees.

We will be speaking to you and other key stakeholders, such as apprentices and trainees and schools.

The summative evaluation will be conducted in future when it is possible to look at completion rates and employment outcomes.

• I would like to talk about the program and how you think it is going from your organisations perspective.
• This is an informal discussion. It will take about 45 minutes to an hour.
• There are no right or wrong answers, generally interested in your views and opinions.
• ASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY RULES - what you say here will not be linked to you within the research unless you give permission.
• EXPLAIN THE AUDIO RECORDING – to focus on listening and not having to write everything down.

Background (To confirm information I already know and warm up respondent)

By way of background I would like you to tell me a little about your organisation.

• How many A&Ts do you have?
• How do you recruit your A&Ts?
• How many employers do you have student placements with?
• What is the geographical spread of your A&Ts?
• How many schools do you interact with? What proportion of your A&Ts are school-based apprentices or school-based trainees?

Priority Groups

• What is the profile of your A&Ts? Which of the target groups does your student base represent? I.E. Aboriginal Australians, people with disability, school based apprentices and trainees; and people in remote and regional areas.
• What has been the impact of the change in the priority groups to your organisation, if any? PROBE FULLY
• Has there been any impact on the local community by changing the priority groups? IF YES, in what way?
Impact of new funding arrangements

- The funding arrangements have changed from 50 / 50 to 60 / 20 / 20. How has that influenced how you support with A&Ts from the target groups overall? PROBE FULLY
- Has increased 60% up-front payment impacted on how you recruit A&Ts? PROBE FULLY. PROMPT:
  - Are you recruiting more or less?
  - Are you using different methods?
  - Are there any other differences?
- How has the midterm payment for apprentices impacting on how you support apprentices?
- Has the 20% payment at the end for outcomes impacted on how you interact with A&Ts once they complete their course, or is it too early to say? PROBE FULLY PROMPT:
  - Are you staying in contact (for longer)?
  - Are you monitoring their outcomes? Does that have any issues?
- Before the program started, some GTOs were concerned they may have issues with providing proof of eligibility for SAR and employment outcome payments. Have you found any issues with providing proof?

Overall opinion

- If you could change anything about the current funding model in order to create better outcomes for your apprentices/trainees what would it be? PROBE FULLY
- Is there anything you thought worked better under the previous JGTP?

For KGT only:

You are receiving additional funding to increase the support you provide your A&Ts.
- How is the extra funding impacting on your organisation’s level of support for apprentices and trainees?
- Are you seeing any benefits to providing more support to the A&Ts?
  - If so, please describe in detail.
  - If not, why do you think that is?
  - PROMPT FOR EARLY SIGNS:
    - Is there an increase in commencements?
    - Is there reduced absenteeism?
    - Are there lower levels of attrition – drop-outs?
    - What about transitions to employment or further training?
    - Are you monitoring their outcomes?
    - Have you got any feedback from employers? If so, please describe
    - Have you got any feedback from students? If so, please describe

If you could change anything about the KGT pilot in order to create better outcomes for your students what would it be? PROBE FULLY

Finally, is there anything you would like to say about the new WA Group Training Program (or the KGT pilot) that I haven’t covered?

Thank you for your time.
Discussion Guide for Host employers (for AASN and TAFES use an abbreviated version)

Evaluation of WA Group Training Program (inc. KGT pilot)

Introduction

• Thanks for agreeing to participate in this evaluation

• EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION:
  The Department has decided to undertake an evaluation of the program. There are two parts to the evaluation, a formative stage we are conducting right now and summative stage at the end. The formative evaluation will inform how the program is run from now onwards.

  In the short term the evaluation aims to get a better understanding how the changes in the funding arrangements are impacting upon GTO’s capacity to train and support your apprentices and trainees.

  We will be speaking to you and other key stakeholders, such as apprentices and trainees and schools.

  The summative evaluation will be conducted in future when it is possible to look at completion rates and employment outcomes.

• I would like to talk about the program and how you think it is going from your organisation’s perspective.

• This is an informal discussion. It will take about 20 to 30 minutes.

• There are no right or wrong answers, generally interested in your views and opinions.

• ASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY RULES - what you say here will not be linked to you within the research unless you give permission.

• EXPLAIN THE AUDIO RECORDING – to focus on listening and not having to write everything down.

Background (To confirm information I already know and warm up respondent)
By way of background I would like you to tell me a little about your organisation.

• What does your organisation do?

• How long have you had a relationship with [KGT or Midwest]?

• How many A&Ts do you have?

• Do you employ A&Ts directly or do you only employ A&Ts through GTOs.

• What is your overall opinion of [KGT or Midwest] and their A&Ts?

• IF APPLICABLE ASK: What do you see as the benefits of using a GTO compared to direct indenture? And vice versa?
Impact of new funding arrangements (and KGT Pilot)

SPONTANEOUS:
Since July 2016 there has been a change to how the Department funds GTOs. Have you noticed any difference in how the GTOs operate since that time?

PROMPT FOR:
Have you noticed any changes in:
- Types of A&Ts (change in priority groups)
- GTO dealings with your organisation
- GTO dealings with the apprentices and trainees
  - At the start of apprenticeship or traineeship
  - Support provided during apprenticeship or traineeship
  - On completion of apprenticeship or traineeship

How has the GTO behaviour changed? What have you noticed? Is it good or bad?

If you could change anything about the Group Training Program (or the KGT pilot) in order to create better outcomes for your apprentices/trainees what would it be? PROBE FULLY

If you could change anything about the Group Training Program (or the KGT pilot) in order to create better outcomes for your organisation what would it be? PROBE FULLY

Finally, is there anything you would like to say about the new WA Group Training Program (or the KGT pilot) that I haven't covered?

Thank you for your time.
Discussion Guide for Apprentices and Trainees
Evaluation of WA Group Training Program (inc. KGT pilot)

Introduction

- Thanks for agreeing to participate in this evaluation
- EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION:

| The Department has decided to evaluate the Group Training Program [KGT / ATC Midwest. We will be speaking to you and other key stakeholders, such as host employers and schools. |
| It will inform how the program is run from now onwards. |
| We want to get a better understanding how some changes the Department has made to the funding are impacting upon how [KGT /Midwest] train and support apprentices and trainees. |

- I would like to talk about the program and how you think it is going from your perspective.
- This is an informal discussion. It will take about 20 minutes.
- There are no right or wrong answers, generally interested in your views and opinions.
- ASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY RULES - what you say here will not be linked to you within the research unless you give permission.
- EXPLAIN THE AUDIO RECORDING – to focus on listening and not having to write everything down.

Background (To confirm information I already know and warm up respondent)

By way of background I would like you to tell me a little about you.

- How long have you been an apprentice / trainee?
- What do you do?
- Where did you start your apprenticeship? Who was your first employer?
- IF APPLICABLE ASK: Why did you change employers?
- How long have you been with this employer?
- When do you aim to complete your apprenticeship / traineeship?
- Who is your main contact at [KGT / Midwest]?
- What is your overall opinion of [KGT / Midwest]?

Impact of new funding arrangements (and KGT Pilot)

ASK ALL

PROMPT FOR:
Please describe the way [KGT / Midwest] and you deal with each other. What kinds of support does [KGT / Midwest] give you?

- At the start of apprenticeship or traineeship
- During apprenticeship or traineeship
IF APPRENTICE/TRAINEE STARTED TRAINING BEFORE JULY 2015:

SPONTANEOUS:
Since July 2015 there has been a change to how the Department funds [KGT/Midwest]. Have you noticed any difference in how [KGT or Midwest] operates since that time?

PROMPT FOR:
Have you noticed any changes in:

- [KGT / Midwest] dealings with your host employer (ONLY ASK IF APPLICABLE)
- [KGT / Midwest] dealings with yourself
  - At the start of apprenticeship or traineeship
  - Support provided during apprenticeship or traineeship
  - On completion of apprenticeship or traineeship

How has the [KGT / Midwest] behaviour changed? What have you noticed? Is it good or bad?

ASK ALL

Can you think of examples where their support has been a stand out?

Can you think of examples where their support could have been better?

Is there anything that [KGT / Midwest] could do to better to support you during your training? PROBE FULLY

If you could change anything about [KGT / Midwest] (or the KGT pilot) in order to create better outcomes for you what would it be? PROBE FULLY

Finally, is there anything you would like to say about the new WA Group Training Program (or the KGT pilot) that I haven’t covered?

Thank you for your time.
Discussion Guide for VET teachers
Evaluation of the WA Group Training Program

Introduction

- Thanks for agreeing to participate in this evaluation
- EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION:
  We sent you a bit of background information about the WA Group Training Program. [PROVIDE AGAIN IF NOT RECEIVED].

The WA Group Training Program provides incentives for group training organisations to employ apprentices and trainees from key under-represented groups and in skills shortage occupations.

The program replaced the Joint Group Training Program (JGTP), which ceased on 30 June 2015 when the Commonwealth withdrew its funding contribution to the program. Since 1 July 2015 the groups supported and the funding structure to GTOs has changed.

- The priority groups now supported are school based apprentices and trainees; Aboriginal Australians; people with disability; and people in remote and regional areas.
- The new funding model includes: an increase in commencement payments from 50 per cent to 60 per cent; the introduction of mid-term payments for apprentices; the introduction of a 20 per cent outcome payment if the student completes the training contract; and/or a 20 per cent payment if the student gains on-going employment.

The objectives of the WAGTP are to improve outcomes of apprentices and trainees in State priority target groups including completions; increase school based arrangements, with emphasis on completions and outcomes; and achieve sustained employment outcomes, either before or after completion (in current role or new job), or transitioning from traineeship to apprenticeship.

- I would like to talk about the group training program, hear your opinions about how the changes have affected you and your students.
- This is an informal discussion. It will take about 20-30 minutes.
- There are no right or wrong answers, generally interested in your views and opinions.
- ASSURE CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY RULES - what you say here will not be linked to you within the research unless you give permission.
- EXPLAIN THE AUDIO RECORDING – to focus on listening and not having to write everything down.

Background

As way of background I would like to know a bit about how school-based apprenticeships (SBAs) and school-based traineeships (SBTs) run at this school.

- How many SBAs/SBTs are placed with the group training organisation [Midwest or Kimberley Group Training]?
- How many SBAs/SBTs are direct indenture?
- Which qualifications are being offered, and through which RTOs?
- Which employers are used?
Impact

SPONTANEOUS RECALL:

- Have you noticed any difference to the group training arrangements since July 2015?
  IF YES: What are those changes and how have they impacted upon the school?
  IF NO: Were you aware that there have been changes to the Group training program?

PROMPTED

- Have you noticed any changes in the way [Kimberley Group Training / Midwest] engage with the school and the students?
  IF YES, ASK: In what way? Explain fully.
  IF NO: continue.

- Have you noticed an increase in the level of support [Kimberley Group Training / Midwest] provide the students or the VET staff?
  IF YES, ASK: In what way? Explain fully.
  IF NO: continue.

- Have you noticed any improvements in commencements for SBAs/SBTs employed by [Kimberley Group Training / Midwest]?

- Have you noticed any improvements in outcomes for SBAs/SBTs employed by [Kimberley Group Training / Midwest]? Outcomes includes completions, transitions, reduced absenteeism and attrition.
  IF YES, ASK: can you provide examples of any improvements?
  IF NO: continue.

Improvements

- Is there any aspect of the Group Training Program you would like to change to make the program work better for you and your school? Can you think of anything that would improve outcomes for the students?
  Please explain fully,

Finally, is there anything you would like to say about the WA Group Training Program that I haven’t covered?

Thank you for your time.
Appendix B: Surveys
WAGTP Participants Survey

* 1. How has the new funding model changed your organisation's ability to attract apprentices & trainees in the target groups? 
   - Improved  
   - No Change  
   - Declined  

   Please explain your answer, providing as much detail as possible.

* 2. How has the new funding model changed your organisation's ability to support apprentices & trainees during their training?  
   - Improved  
   - No Change  
   - Declined  

   Please explain your answer, providing as much detail as possible.

* 3. How has the new funding model changed your organisation's ability to support apprentices & trainees after their training?  
   - Improved  
   - No Change  
   - Declined  
   - Too early to say  

   Please explain your answer, providing as much detail as possible.
* 4. The WA GTP introduced changes in the way the payments are structured. Please indicate the extent to which your organisation views the following changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>For the better</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>For the worse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased up-front payment from 50% to 60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term payment for apprentices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in completion payment from 50% to 20% and Introduction of outcome payment of 20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome payment paid whether training completed or not</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 5. Have you had any issues obtaining the proof required for the following payments?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proof Required</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Student at Risk status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other training outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please provide details of any issues you have had obtaining proof or claiming payments.


6. Finally, do you have any suggestions to make the Group Training Program create better outcomes for your apprentices and trainees and your organisation?


WAGTP Non-Participants Survey

1. Why did your organisation not apply to participate in the 2016-17 Group Training Program?
   - Only interested in providing training in skills shortage areas
   - Other reasons (please describe)

2. Do you have any suggestions for the Group Training Program to make it more attractive so your organisation would participate in the future?