Kia ora tatou

As you read this, many of you will be counting down to Christmas and some quality time with friends and family. On behalf of the staff and board members of Skills Active I would like to thank you all for your continued involvement and support of our work with industry. Without you we would not have a role.

From our perspective we have made some considerable progress this year - I only hope you have noticed some changes at the receiving end. Highlights for us have been...

- Development and launch of a new range of aquatics qualifications, including strands for Pool Lifeguard, Swim Education and Pool Operations
- National launch of new Pool Lifeguard Skills Award and Pool Lifeguard Practicing Certificate, in close partnership with NZRA
- Development and launch of a new range of Recreation and Sport qualifications that are more flexible and suitable for the wide range of roles across the sector
- Complete set of learning and assessment resources developed on time for NZSki staff for 19 qualifications
- Qualification pathways developed and implemented across Parks and Recreation Department of the new Auckland Council. Launch ceremony supported by high-level management within the Council
- Community Leisure Management adopting a qualification pathway for their staff across the entire network of operations
- Outdoor Leader qualifications launched and getting strong interest across the sector, including volunteer, education and commercial groups
- Targeted Review of Qualification (TROQ) processes begun, with the review of snowsport qualifications starting first
- Relationships in place with Les Mills, YMCAs, EONZ, NZ Defence, Girl Guides, Scouts, and more...

Restructure at Skills Active

You will have read and heard through media about the scrutiny that ITOs have been, and continue to be, under. There have been some poor educational performance results from ITOs in the past.

Skills Active, and results from our industry trainees, were not immune to these accusations. However, now that we have been focusing more on results, I believe we have responded well with valuable and relevant qualifications, quality training and assessment resources, improved moderation, and assessment tasks that are embedded within normal work practices.

Nevertheless, the Skills Active Board has carefully considered the size of the trainee pool within our industries who can gain value from the qualifications we offer on-job. Getting this size 'right', and therefore the size of Skills Active 'right', will help ensure quality outcomes. The result of this analysis is that Skills Active needs to be slightly smaller to
service a more targeted pool of trainees. This means reduced income and a staff that is downscaled to respond to this lower level of income.

After reviewing the organisational structure we have made some changes that we believe will help us become even more responsive to our workplaces and trainees, despite having a slightly smaller head count. Our Industry Capability team now has a flatter management structure, which we consider will help communication and information flow. There will be an Auckland-based Business Manager leading our Northern team and a Wellington based Business Manager leading our Central/Southern team. Both of these roles are currently being advertised.

We still consider it vital to have specialist industry knowledge to inform our efforts:

- Alan Reynolds remains Learning and Development Advisor (LDA) for Fitness
- Matt Cowie is now LDA for Snowsports and Outdoor Recreation
- We are advertising for an LDA Recreation and Sport, based in Wellington
- Our Kaihautu continues to provide guidance in the area of Nga Mahi Te Rehia

We have appointed Donnalynn Douglas as a specialist Learning Support Advisor to coach and mentor our entire field team to engage with our 15% Maori trainees and help them to achieve their qualifications.

We hope to have our entire team in place by early January, so we can then let you know who your specific contact person is. There should only be an increase in service levels to you, our clients, at the end of these changes. Just bear with us while we get the new structure operative.

As these changes take place, we also need to acknowledge staff who have contributed to Skills Active's work with our industry and who are moving on to other challenges.

- Andre Whittaker has been General Manager of our field team (more recently referred to as our Industry Capability team) for the past 4 years. Andre's quiet, friendly, reflective and supportive approach has helped build relationships for Skills Active with industry around the country. In the office his guitar and welcoming smile will leave a gap that the rest of us will need to fill. Thanks for all of your efforts Andre.
- Paul Richards has been at Skills Active for almost 5 years. His role started with a strong emphasis on the outdoor recreation sector and more recently he has been managing our learning support advisors in the Central region. Paul has continued to keep close links with outdoor organisations and has managed our links with the rafting community in particular. More recently he helped build a growing relationship with Scouts New Zealand, which will see us help qualify the network of Scouting leaders across the country. Thanks Paul.
- Philippa Ward is leaving us at the end of the year. Philippa is expecting her second baby so will be leaving Skills Active to take on the all-important role of being a parent to Taiki and the new addition. Philippa developed strong relationships with clients across the Wellington region during her time at Skills Active. Congratulations Philippa.
- Rachel Taila is leaving us at the end of the year. She has been in our Wellington office in an Administrator Team Leader role and is planning a move to Australia.
- Mike Tipene has been working as an LSA in our Northern region for less than a year but has formed some strong relationships with clients.
Industry Training Review

Government, through the Ministry of Education, is currently reviewing the Industry Training Act. This Act defines the role and responsibilities of all ITOs and how we work with industry. So it's a big deal.

The Ministry is keen to hear from as many employers as possible about what's working well and what's not, and how training and education can better suit the needs of organisations in the future.

The online employers survey (15 minutes to complete) is the key way to have your say. The survey closes on 16 December and we encourage you to take part in this survey as soon as you can. A link to the survey is: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/EmployerSurvey_IndustryTrainingReview

Once the Ministry has completed its review an options paper will be developed for the Ministry of Tertiary Education to consider. From this the Minister will make decisions about any changes to the Act and therefore the future direction and shape of industry training.

Christchurch Earthquake Training Relief Fund

The Skills Active Board is very aware of the impact of the Christchurch earthquake on organisations from our industries around the Christchurch area. To help those organisations return to a new 'normal', we knew there might well be training needs required to get new staff up to speed once the work environment stabilised.

We promoted a training fund for those affected organisations. This fund was publicised in partnership with the national bodies from our industry sectors: Fitness NZ, Outdoors NZ and the NZ Recreation Association. I am pleased to be able to report that we have allocated training grants to the following workplaces:

- Horizons Unlimited
- YMCA Chch
- Living Springs Trust
- Boyle River Outdoor Education Centre
- Peel Forest Outdoor Pursuits Charitable Trust
- Christchurch City Council
- Fitness NZ - on behalf of independent fitness trainers
- Les Mills Christchurch

We wish these and other Christchurch organisations all the best as they adapt to the post-quakes situation.

Merry Xmas

I wish you all a Merry Christmas on behalf of the staff and look forward to even better times ahead in 2012.

Grant Davidson
CE