



**Adult
Learning
Australia** INC

Lifelong and Lifewide Learning for All Australians

ACE in Australia: From Cinderellas to Boundary Riders

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www.ala.asn.au

Adult and Community Education is...

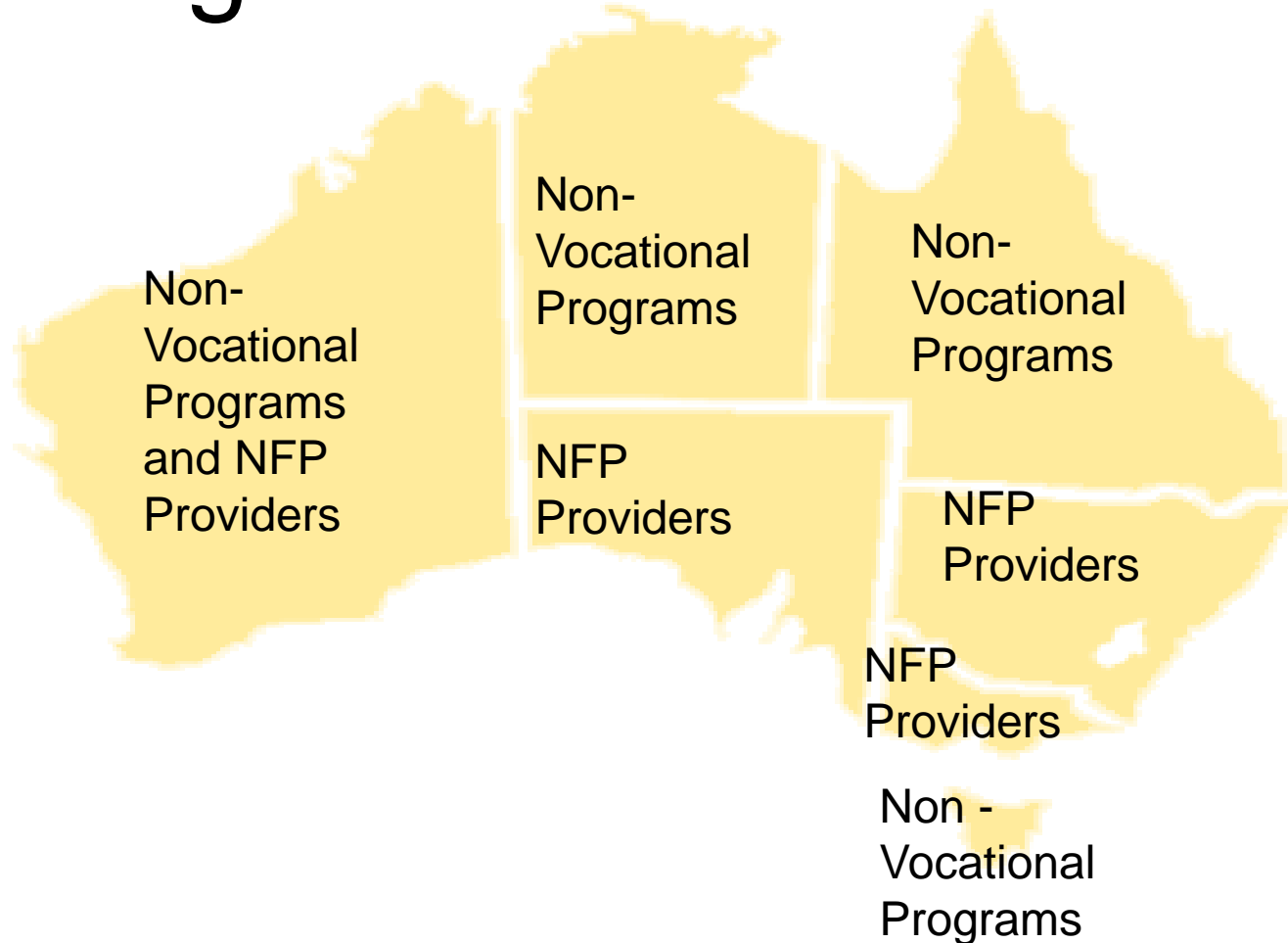
“all education and training activity (including vocational / non-vocational and accredited / non-accredited) which is delivered by not-for-profit community based or community managed organisations that provide learning opportunities for adults;

and

non-vocational (accredited / non-accredited) education and training activities which are delivery by TAFE institutes and other private Commercial RTOs.”

2008 Review of the 2002 Ministerial Declaration on ACE

Programs and Providers



Modern ACE Organisations have grown out of the vestiges of one of the following:

- Mechanics Institutes, Schools of Mines, Schools of Arts and Circulating Libraries (2nd half of the 1800's)
- Workers Education Associations (just prior to WW1)
- CAE in Melbourne and regional branches, Community Colleges in NSW, (post world war 2)
- Neighborhood House Movement (1970's early 80's)
- Skillshares (early 90's)

ACE and VET

ACE Tradition	VET Tradition
All learning inherently valuable	Focused on skills that are of value to industry (and individuals by extension)
Lifelong (including into the senior years)	“Working Life” long
Lifewide: skills for wellbeing and civic participation	Generic Employability Skills
Values Continuing Education as well as Pathway Education	Invests heavily at the beginning of the learning journey

ACE and VET

ACE = Lifelong and Lifewide for Entire Populations

VET = Strategic investments in particular skills for particular parts of the population

ACE / VET Intersection = Pathway Education,
Generic Skills, Workforce Participation

Adult Learning Policy Environment

Productivity Agenda

- 1) Early childhood development
- 2) Vocational education and training reform
 - VET regulator
 - *Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)*
 - National Student Identifier
 - Green Skills Agreement
 - Apprenticeships ¹

Social Inclusion Agenda

1. Supporting children at greatest risk of long term disadvantage
2. Helping jobless families with children
3. Focusing on the locations of greatest disadvantage
4. Assisting in the employment of people with disability or mental illness
5. Addressing the incidence of homelessness
6. Closing the gap for Indigenous Australians ²

1) 2011 Council of Australian Governments Communique

2) www.socialinclusion.gov.au

The Policy Conversation

“Our strong economy gives us a real chance to create opportunity from the cradle to the grave.I want to help individuals, families and communities whose worklessness has seen them excluded from society and the economy through decades of economic growth.”

Prime Minister Gillard, April 2011 Speech to the Sydney Institute

The Policy Conversation

Vocational training is the best educational response to productivity, and industry are best placed to determine what this looks like.

+

“Welfare to Work” programs are the best educational response to workforce participation. “sticks and carrots.”

—



= Productivity + Social Inclusion



Cinderellas



Boundary Riders

ACE operates at the boundaries of:

- Community Services and Education Sectors
- Human Capital and Social Capital Agendas
- Human Rights and Productivity Approaches
- Home and Institutional Settings
- Vocational and Non-Vocational Lives

“ALA believes that the key features that define ACE providers are:

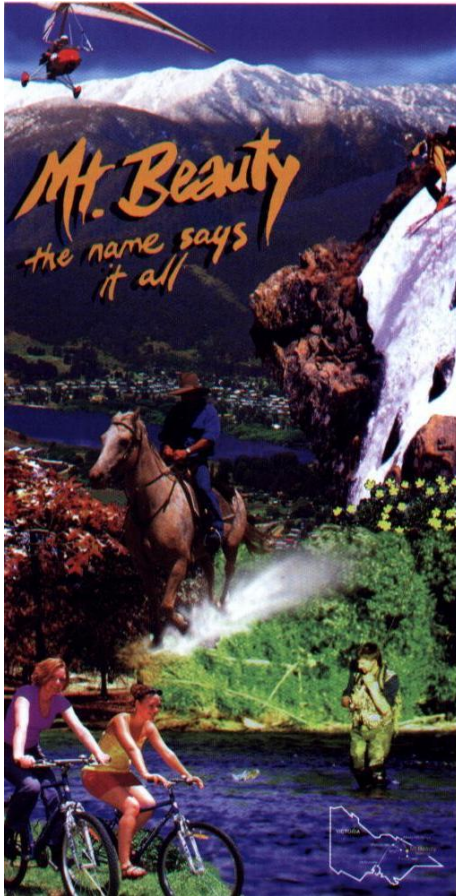
- not for profit
- place - based community development amongst their core aims
- providing non-formal learning programs in addition to formal VET programs”

ALA Response to NVEAC Blueprint on Equity, 2010

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Mt Beauty



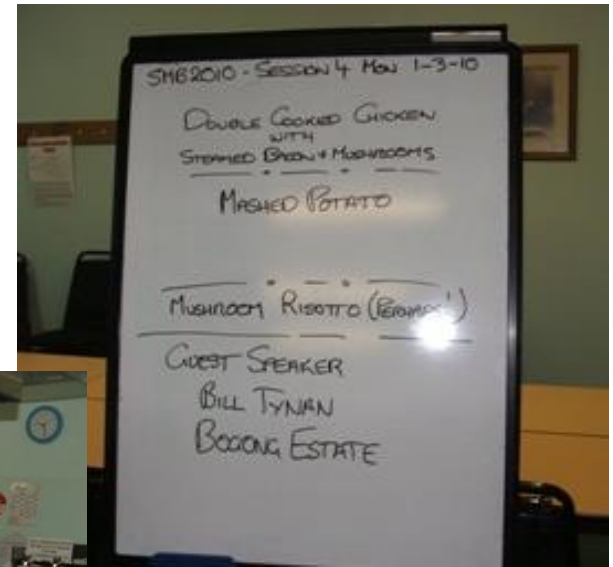
In 2006:

- 60% of households earned less than \$500 per week.
- well above average level of one parent families and of persons living alone.
- Above average unemployment.
- Noticeably above average level of self-reported disability

Alpine Shire Council,
www.alpinewshire.vic.gov.au, 2010

Secret Men's Business

- Draws on research about older men's learning (eg Golding, Brown, Mark etc)
- Run for and by men
- Teacher is a local chef
- Cert 2 in Hospitality



Albany, WA

Population: 33600

290 km south east of Perth

Major Industries: Tourism,
Fishing and Agriculture



Mum's The Word

OUR **AWARD** WINNING PROGRAM MUM'S THE WORD

- 15- 25 Year Old Mums
- Combines Parenting, Community Service and VET
- Cert in General Education for Adults Or
- Certificate 2 in Business Administration



Some Flies in the Policy Ointment



- The overwhelming body of research about adult literacy suggests that it is largely a social process developed **through** participation, not as a prerequisite to it.
- Non-formal learning plays a significant role in the development of literacy skills.
- Today's 18 year olds can be expected to make up to 10 significant employment / career changes in their adult lives.
- Adults will not “enter” the workforce once. They will enter, leave and re-enter many times.
- Even though we are living longer, we are not working longer. Men in particular, are retiring earlier than ever before.

Adult Learning that allows adults to

- Build homes and families
- Participate as citizens in a vibrant democracy
- Manage health and wellbeing
- Cope with employment, unemployment, underemployment, casualisation, and active retirement

Is not Basket Weaving!

