

# Future proofing industry training

By Paul Hollings, Industry Training Manager, ETITO

GOVERNMENT IS MAKING CLEAR DEMANDS THAT THE TERTIARY TRAINING SECTOR LIFT ITS PERFORMANCE AND DELIVER MORE VALUE FOR ITS FUNDING, WHICH IS NOW CAPPED. ETITO IS KEEN TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGE, BUT TO DO SO WILL REQUIRE CHANGES TO OUR TRAINING SYSTEM TO ENSURE THE MODEL IS SUSTAINABLE.

First on the agenda is the time it takes for apprentices to finish their qualifications. Historically programme completion times [though they exist] were never strictly enforced by ETITO. This has meant that a significant number of electrical apprentices have always taken longer to finish than the standard duration of three years and eight months. Right now we have around 300 'over-duration' apprentices at four months past the completion date, with another 150 at three months over.

To fix this ETITO training managers are visiting over-duration apprentices around the country and putting them into completion plans, which set milestones that must be met. Often these apprentices have been progressing well through their training, and only have a few on-job unit standards remaining. We are asking employers to support their apprentices in this effort. If over-duration apprentices fail to meet the milestones in their training plans, they risk losing their training agreements, which may disqualify them from entering into a new ETITO training agreement in future.

We will also make sure new apprentices understand the expectations around completion times from the outset. ETITO will increase contact with apprentices so they and their employers know exactly where they are, and how long they have left in their programme.

One of our biggest challenges has always been to provide an excellent level of service to our industries, while also balancing the books. A closer look shows that traditionally ETITO has masked the true cost of training by absorbing the growing cost of off-job training provision, qualification development and reviews, training management and customer services. ETITO has not increased the training management fee for electrical apprentices since January 2005, yet costs for supporting training have continued to rise.

Currently, employers contribute to the cost of training through a \$217 [excluding GST] training management fee per apprentice. Added to this, ETITO receives \$1700 per apprentice annually in Government funding – which makes a total \$1917 per apprentice.



Yet the current average subsidy we pay to a training provider for off-job training alone is \$2300 – which is a loss itself, and that's without taking into account the other services ETITO provides to the industry. Clearly this is also not sustainable.

The industry training model was created from the outset with the expectation that industry would contribute to costs. After all, ETITO exists for the benefit of industry. Faced with the dual challenge of lifting our level of service to meet completion targets, while signals from Government indicate that no extra funding will be available in the foreseeable future, in 2011 ETITO will be reviewing the training management fee. While no definite numbers have been agreed upon at the time of writing, employers can expect this to rise.

Yes, there are challenges, but we are certain ETITO can count on the support of the electrical industry as we rise to meet them. Training will continue – it must continue, if we are to ever stand a chance of meeting the skills demands of the electrical industry.

**Terry Kidd – North Shore and Northland**  
Ph: 09 583 1338 Mob: 027 461 8384

**Brett Piskulic – Central and West Auckland**  
Ph: 09 583 1344 Mob: 027 461 8287

**Vijen Subramoney – South Auckland**  
Ph: 09 583 1353 Mob: 027 205 3080

**Bob Thomas – Hamilton**  
Ph: 07 839 7395 Mob: 027 489 0981

**Paul Mitchell – Rotorua**  
Ph: 07 349 3461 Mob: 027 280 5243

**Marty Matheson – Wellington  
Christchurch  
Dunedin**

Ph: 03 365 9252 Mob: 027 461 7018



ETITO