

BUNDABERG SKILLS CENTRE INC

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SOCIAL ACCOUNTING REPORT 2004

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INTRODUCTION

Bundaberg Skills Centre was founded on the belief that every person has the right to employment if they so desire and that every participant should be treated with respect and encouraged to reach their full potential. The social accounting system presented a way of establishing if Bundaberg Skills Centre is achieving its stated beliefs and principals. The Board Chairperson and the CEO developed an interest in social accounting after attending a conference where theories and results of the system were presented. Following the conference Jobs Australia arranged for Professor John Pearce to conduct a three-day Social Accounting workshop, and the Chairperson and the CEO attended. It was decided at the workshop to present the concept to the Board of Directors and Staff to ascertain the level of interest and support for Bundaberg Skills Centre to undertake a Social Audit. Once the concept was accepted, a Sub-committee was formed to oversee the process.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Bundaberg Skills Centre is a community based “not for profit” organisation. Its primary aim is to provide employment and learning opportunities for the community, in particular disadvantaged and unemployed persons, including people with a disability by providing

- Quality training in a supportive environment
- Innovative and dynamic responses to our client needs
- Assisting clients to overcome barriers to learning and employment
- Supported employment opportunities for clients with a disability

Bundaberg Skills Centre is a Registered Training Organisation and a Registered Employment Agency. The organisation provides quality training, welfare and community services to the people of the Bundaberg region.

The organisation was formed in 1978 following a public meeting which was called to discuss the need for a program to assist unemployed youth. Subsequently Government funding was received to conduct the Bundaberg Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS). In 1989 the Government replaced CYSS programs with SkillShares, a broader based program aimed at assisting unemployed people of all ages. Bundaberg SkillShare was one of the largest SkillShare programs in Australia. In April 1998 the Government ceased funding Skillshare programs and Bundaberg Skills Centre then gained contracts to conduct Employment Services under the Job Network. It also commenced operating a New Apprenticeship Centre. Bundaberg Skills Centre ceased offering these programs in March 2000. During this period the organisation employed over 60 permanent staff and serviced a large population of unemployed people and employers.

With the closure of these programs, Staff numbers were reduced to 20. Since that time the organisation has steadily rebuilt its operation and now employs 50 permanent staff, 18 people with disabilities and a number of casual tutors.

The major programs being offered in 2004 are training for traineeships under a User Choice Contract, Community Work Coordinator for Work for the Dole, Jobs Placement Employment & Training for youth, Community Volunteer Visitors Scheme, Personal Support Program, Transition to Work, and Green Corps, Community Jobs Plan, Community Employment Assistance Program, Worker Assistance Program, Indigenous Employment Support Scheme, and various training programs.

In the Disability area Bundaberg Skills Centre oversees a Business Service Unit which operates a Recycling plant in conjunction with the Bundaberg City Council. Other Disability Services offered are Open Employment through Cased Based funding and state funding training and employment programs.

Throughout its 26 year history Bundaberg Skills Centre has enjoyed a reputation as a quality provider of services. This can be demonstrated through the number of contracts gained and positive outcomes achieved by clients.

The organisation has maintained a low turn over in staff and Board Members, with only 3 Chairpersons and 2 Chief Executive Officers during its history. The current Chairperson has led the organisation for the past 17 years and the Chief Executive Officer has been in her position for 23 years. This stability has enhanced the strength of the organisation.

Bundaberg Skills Centre has the reputation of being an innovative organisation where clients are treated with respect and dignity. It has developed a reputation for delivering quality training, and has won a number of awards for innovative and quality training. Clients have undertaken training covering a diverse range of subjects from construction and engineering through to Business and Information Technology skills.

Bundaberg Skills Centre has been driven by the belief that every individual in society should be treated with respect and encouraged to reach their full potential. Each has the right to employment if they so desire and this basic philosophy has determined the ethos of the organisation. Severely disadvantaged clients with multiple barriers to employment have been assisted to achieve their goals.

There is a strong emphasis on staff professional development and regular meetings ensure that staff are focused on providing a supportive environment for our disadvantaged clients. Indigenous programs have been undertaken with the support of the local community. Youth programs have at times created some difficulties with the larger community because of clients' behavioural and social problems. However a caring environment has succeeded in providing positive outcomes for the thousands of individuals who have attended over the years.

Bundaberg Skills Centre has maintained a collaborative approach in relation to program development. Clients and other stakeholders have been encouraged to provide feedback on the operation of the centre.

The organisation sponsors community activities such as the Community Volunteer Visitors Program. This initiative provides volunteer visitors for residents of aged care facilities, assisting the resident to remain connected to the local community. Another community service program is Green Corps. It provides opportunities for young people to be involved in projects with a heritage, environmental or preservation emphasis. Bundaberg Skills Centre also provides community services through its Disability programs.

Social Accounting

The Social Accounting process commenced in April 2003. The Board Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Executive Administrative Officer and the Co-ordinator of Youth Services volunteered to form a Sub-committee to assist with the audit. The Board Chairperson has managed the process.

A timetable was established and after Stakeholders were identified questionnaires were compiled and delivered to the selected individuals. A Consultant was employed to compile results from the surveys. It has taken 12 months to complete the project.

BUNDABERG SKILLS CENTRE INC; MISSION, VALUES AND OBJECTIVES

Dates of Social Accounting Period: April 2003 – June 2004

VISION

Bundaberg Skills Centre aims to be a quality provider of employment and learning opportunities for the community in particular disadvantaged and unemployed people and people with a disability.

MISSION STATEMENT

To be a Bundaberg based not for profit organisation providing employment and learning opportunities for the community, in particular disadvantaged and unemployed persons, including people with a disability by providing:

- Quality training in a supportive environment
- Innovative and dynamic responses to our client needs
- Assisting clients to overcome barriers to learning and employment
- Supported employment opportunities for clients with a disability

VALUES

The ethical standards which underpin the organisation's operations are:

- Services are client focused
- Respect for individuals
- Maintenance of a caring and supportive environment
- High standards of integrity and confidentiality
- Continual improvement
- Financial responsibility
- Empowerment of clients

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Objective 1

To ensure that all key performance indicators in current contracts are reached in order to guarantee the success of gaining future contracts as far as possible by: -

- Reviewing policies and procedures for the management of contracts to ensure that best practice is in place. Emphasis will be on meeting client needs, KPI's, financial and program reports.
- Ensuring that sufficient staff are employed to maintain a high standard of service and to meet the key performance indicators.
- Having sufficient management in place for these staff to provide adequate supervision.
- Having QA procedures in place to ensure the right things are being done and results are being achieved, and encourage staff to follow the QA procedures.
- Ensuring staff are trained and skilled in the areas in which they are operating. Maintaining the supportive environment and facilities for students.
- Ensuring that sufficient resources are available to fulfill each contract and ensure quality delivery of programs including - quality of training resources, equipment and staff
- Distributing copies of the KPI's to staff involved in each contract.

Objective 2

To diversify our business opportunities to enable the organisation to be less reliant on government funding by utilising core assets and capabilities by:

- By encouraging Board Directors and staff to suggest possible business opportunities that fit with Mission, skills and assets
- Liaising with business development units, at State, Federal and Local Government level and Development Boards
- The Enterprise Development Officer following up suggestions and leads and preparing feasibility studies on each
- Ideas being assessed to ensure they do not fall outside of the mission and PBI status parameters and are not unfair competition for existing business
- Applications for program funding being diversified to reduce reliance on one section of funding, with an aim of having a number of smaller programs rather than a limited number of larger programs

Objective 3

Recognising the unstable income environment we work in and to generate and maintain adequate reserves to withstand sudden or significant changes in income by:

- Identifying all foreseeable expenses and set aside sufficient funds to deal with them
- Preparing annual projections of income and expenditure
- Determining what reserves need to be held to cover significant changes in income
- Low risk investments strategy will be continued to provide high security of funds and moderate returns

Objective 4

Maintain and develop staff who have empathy for the client base of Bundaberg Skills Centre and who understand the trends in the Human Services Industry by:

- Attracting suitable staff through marketing of vacancies and providing attractive salary packages
- Careful selection of staff to ensure they have an understanding of and empathy for the client base
- Appointing a staff training officer who undertakes regular staff training needs analyses and identifies and implements suitable training within budget constraints
- Budget allocation for staff training to be not less than 5% of wage budget
- Continuing with bi-weekly staff meetings incorporating a training segment
- Providing a work environment that is supportive of staff, and maintain wages and conditions to a standard that is at least equal to similar employment opportunities

Objective 5

To ensure that we provide and maintain modem infrastructure and technology that is capable of meeting the demands of future expansion by:

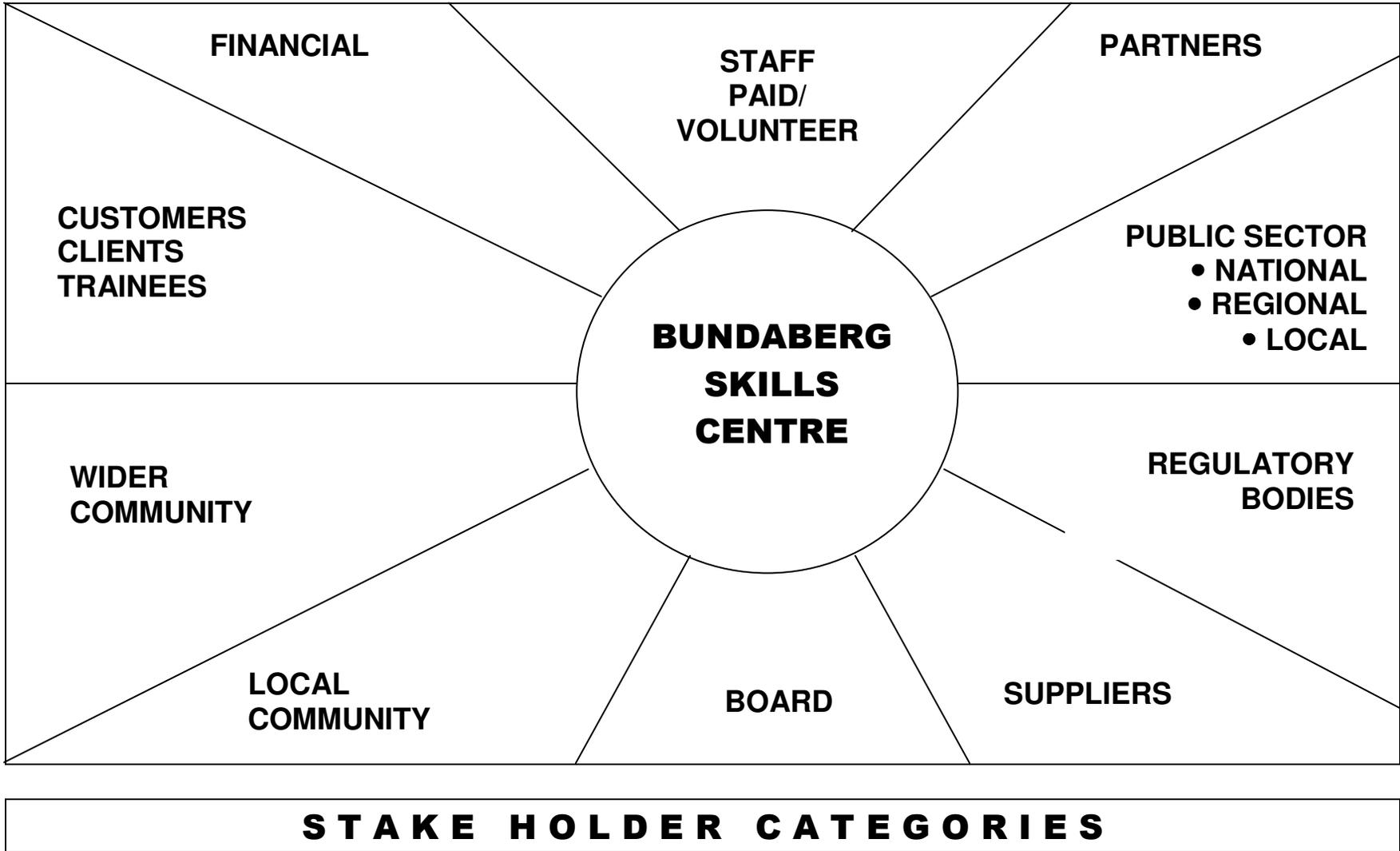
- Having a policy and budget allocation to replace IT equipment regularly
- Creating a new position for a resources officer to ensure that assets are secure and maintained in working condition
- Keeping staff abreast of changes by attendance at conferences, and training programs
- Replacing at least one third of computers each year ensuring that no computers are more than 3 years old
- Keeping current with latest IT trend developments and by maintaining an efficient information technology register

Questionnaires were sent to all stakeholders to ascertain if the stated objectives were being achieved.

BUNDABERG SKILLS CENTRE INC. : ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS

The Sub-committee discussed the method of identifying the key stakeholders. It was decided to ask the Board of Directors and Staff to select Stakeholders. This was done at a Board Meeting and at a Staff Meeting attended by the Board Chairperson who co-ordinated the Audit.

Key Stakeholders	Other stakeholders
Board of Directors Staff Clients – Unemployed, Trainees, Consumers Volunteers Families/carers of the clients with disabilities Aged Care Facilities High Schools TAFE College Job Network Employment Service Group Training Companies Partners: Job Futures Government Departments State Federal Local Government Employers Preferred Suppliers	Financial Legal Local Bank Auditor Solicitor Family of the clients



SCOPE OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTING PROCESS : VALUES

VALUES	METHOD OF CHECKING
Services are client focussed	Questionnaires with stakeholder – selection of present and past clients
Respect for individuals	Questionnaires with all stakeholders
Maintenance of a caring and supportive environment	Questionnaires with stakeholders
Continual improvement	Questionnaires with stakeholders
Financial responsibility	Financial audit – audit sub-committee
Empowerment of clients	Questionnaires with stakeholders

OBJECTIVES/ACTIVITIES/INFORMATION REQUIRED/METHOD OF GATHERING

Activity	Information required	Possible method of gathering
Objective 1 - To ensure that all key performance indicators in current contracts are reached in order to guarantee the success of gaining future contracts as far as possible by:		
Reviewing policies and procedures for the management of contracts to ensure the best practice is in place.	Management process for KPI	Checking audit of performance of contracts
Ensuring that sufficient staff are employed to maintain a high standard of service	Clients exit statements Staff assessments of courses	Records of clients assessment of courses Audit of contract performance
Ensuring there is sufficient management in place to provide adequate staff supervision	Management meeting reports Staff meeting reports	Records of strategic planning meetings Records of staff and management meetings
Having QA procedures and encouraging staff to follow procedures	Checking QA compliance	Audits of the QA system
Ensuring staff are trained and skilled in the areas in which they are operating	Records of staff qualifications and experience	Contract Records
Ensuring that sufficient resources are available to fulfil each contract	Assessment of contract performance	Contract Records

Objective 2 - To diversity business opportunities to enable the organisation to be less reliant on government funding by utilising core assets and capabilities by:		
Encouraging staff to suggest possible business opportunities that fit with mission, skills and assets	Results of Staff planning sessions Results of Management meeting	Records of strategic planning meeting
Liaising with business development units at State, Federal and Local Government and Development Boards.	Evidence of consulting with funding bodies	Board meeting Reports
Checking that new business opportunities are not unfair competition for existing business	Evidence of consultation with the development officer and Local Business organisation	Board Meeting Reports

Objective 3 - Recognising the unstable income environment we work in and to generate and maintain adequate reserve to withstand sudden or significant changes in income by:		
Identifying all foreseeable expenses and set aside sufficient funds to deal with them	Evidence of budgets and financial planning	Financial Record
Preparing annual projections of income and expenditure	Annual projections of income and expenditure	Financial Records
Determining what reserves need to be held to cover significant changes in income	Results of Financial Planning meetings with Audit Sub-committee	Record of the Board of Directors Meetings
Low risk investment strategy	Results of Investment Strategy meetings	Record of the Board of Directors Meetings

Objective 4 - Maintaining and develop staff who have empathy for the clients base of Bundaberg Skills Centre and who understand the trends in the Human Services Industry by:		
Attracting suitable staff through marketing of vacancies and providing attractive salary packages	Evidence of published vacancy notices in newspapers Levels of staff salaries	Records of staff employment policies and their implementation
Careful selection of staff to ensure they have an understanding and empathy for the client base	Staff selection practices	Records of employment processes
Budget allocation for staff training to be not less than 5% of wage budget	Budget statement for financial year	Financial Records
Staff meeting incorporating a training segment	Evidence of staff meeting and agenda	Records of Staff meetings
Providing a work environment that is supportive of staff, and maintain wages and conditions to a standard that is at least equal to similar employment opportunities	Evidence of staff morale And level of staff salaries and comparative levels in Human Service Industry	Questionnaires with management and Staff and data re salary levels in the Human Service Industry
Appointment of staff training officer to undertake regular staff training needs analyses and to identify and implement suitable training within budget constraints	Appointment of the Staff Training Officer ; evidence of Training Needs Analysis and training activities for staff	Staff Training Records

Objective 5 - To ensure that we provide and maintain modern infrastructure and technology that is capable of meeting the demands of future expansion by :		
Having a policy and budget allocation to replace IT equipment regularly	Budget documents and policy re replacement of IT equipment	Budget documents evidence of replacement of IT equipment Assets register
Creating a new position for a resource officer to ensure that assets are secure and maintained in working condition	Resource Officer	Asset Register and record of maintenance of IT equipment
Keeping staff abreast of change by attendance at conferences and training programs	Evidence of staff attendance at upgrading of IT skills	Staff records
Replacing at least one third of computers each year ensuring that no computers are more than 3 years old.	Evidence of the age of IT equipment	Asset Register
Keeping current with the latest trends development in efficient information technology register	Evidence from IT staff that this has happened	Staff records

SUMMARY OF THE SOCIAL BOOKKEEPING SYSTEM

Quantitative

- Staff employment records
- Staff training records
- Staff salary records
- Staff Meetings
- Management Meetings
- Financial accounts
- Profit and Loss Accounts
- Cash Flow
- Audit Financial Statements
- Budget documents
- Asset register
- QA system
- QA Compliance Records
- QA External Audit
- Board of Directors monthly meetings
- Audit Sub-committee meetings
- Financial Planning sub-committee meetings
- Strategic Planning meetings
- Client assessment documents
- Contracts compliance documents
- Policy documents
- Annual General Meeting Reports

Qualitative

- Questionnaires for clients in following programs -
 - Fee for Service Training
 - Youth
 - Disability
 - Training
 - Green Corps
 - Community Visitors
- Questionnaires for parents or carers of clients with a disability
- Questionnaires for Participating High Schools
- Questionnaires for Participating Nursing Homes
- Questionnaires for Partner Organisations – Job Futures and Jobs Australia
- Questionnaires for Government Departments – State, Federal, and Local
- Questionnaires for Employers
- Questionnaires for Preferred Suppliers
- Questionnaires for Group Training Companies

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

The Social Audit Sub-Committee decided to consult with the stakeholders by formulating questionnaires for each group. It was decided that to undertake focus groups of stakeholders was beyond the capacity of committee organising the process. Separate questionnaires were developed for the following groups

- Unemployed Clients
- User Choice Clients
- Clients who had completed training
- Clients who were currently undertaking programs
- Board of Directors
- Management and Staff
- Workers with Disabilities at the Recycling Plant
- Parents or Carers of clients with disabilities
- Partnering Organisations
- Employers
- Preferred Suppliers
- High Schools
- Nursing Homes
- Community Visitors
- Green Corps
- Youth programs
- Job Network Employment Services Companies
- Government Departments – Federal, State, Local
- Development Board
- Group Training Companies

Analysis of Questionnaires

An outside Consultant was employed to compile the results of the questionnaires. This Consultant has been employed on previous occasions at Bundaberg Skills Centre, so is familiar with the operations of the organisation. The Consultant is also employed at the local campus of Central Queensland University and was accredited and capable of undertaking the analysis.

The glitches were that there was a poor response from the parents/carers of the workers at the Recycling Plant. This may have been due to the fact that when the questionnaires were distributed there was a change in the Manager at the Recycling Plant and the workers and their families were unsettled by the change. There was an initial problem with the staff questionnaires about confidentiality as so some identifying questions were deleted and the staff were re-assured that an outside consultant had been employed to undertake the analysis of the questionnaires. These changes resulted in a high return of the staff questionnaires.

ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

The questionnaires were divided into groups :

- Board of Directors
- Management and Staff
- Client groups
- Recyclers & Collections Workers
- Key Stakeholders and Associated Organisations

Analysis of the of Board of Directors Questionnaires

There were nine questionnaires returned from a possible twelve.

- Majority of Directors indicated that they did not have a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Board, did not fully understand the organisation's Mission and its programs and services and were unclear about the structure of the organisation.
- Many Directors also felt they did not receive regular training and information about their responsibilities
- Many Directors were unclear about strategic goals and future directions.
- The induction for new Directors was not understood probably because it has only been introduced recently and most Directors would not have experienced the induction process
- Most Directors were however satisfied with reports provided re finances/budgets, programs and organisational performance.
- Directors expressed their needs were being met re: the planning of Meetings, Agendas and material supplied relating to significant decisions.
- The Directors also were aware that there was a Conflict of Interest policy, and all Directors complied with the policy.

CONCLUSION

It is noted that four Directors had recently joined the Board as a result of the merger with Independence Incorporated and had not had the opportunity to fully comprehend the complexities of Bundaberg Skills Centre. There is an obvious need for Directors to be trained in

- Organisational structure
- Board Governance
- Strategic Planning
- Detailed explanation of Programs operating within the organisation

COMMENTS on SURVEYS FROM STAFF

Total 46 Surveys completed. Conducted September 2003.

These questions ask about 'your feelings about your job, your terms and conditions and about training' at BSC.

1. General:

1. You will note from the survey responses that 38 staff (out of 46 responses) said they *'strongly agree'* that they enjoy the work they do and 34 staff said they find *'their work interesting'*. This is a very high level of staff work satisfaction.
2. A large number (20) commented that they are unsure of a 'clear sense of my responsibilities within BSC'.
3. 31 staff stated they agree that 'my health and wellbeing at work is taken seriously by BSC.' Whereas 12 respondents disagreed.
4. All averages for general staff feelings were above 3.61 /5 - indicating a good to high level of staff work enjoyment and satisfaction.

2. Support:

1. You will note from the survey responses that the highest level of response was from 29 staff who said they *'get good support from other staff'*; 8 staff indicated they are unsure of and another 8 staff indicated they did not feel *'part of a supportive team of workers'*.
2. All averages for Staff support were above 3.62 indicating an above average feeling of support at BSC

3. Conditions:

1. The highest scoring response indicated was from 35 staff stating they are *'happy with the hours I work'*.
2. The lowest scoring response was from 29 staff indicating they disagree that they are *'not under too much work pressure'*.

4. Communications:

1. The highest averages in this area came from 37 staff stating they are *'proud to work for BSC'*; and 36 staff agreeing they *'speak highly of BSC to my friends'*.
2. Lowest score in this area was from 15 staff agreeing and 5 staff *'don't know'* if they are *'able to influence the decisions-making of BSC'*.

5. Training

1. The first response to fall below average (2.86) is 21 staff stating that they disagree that *'the staff appraisal system is good'*. It is to be noted that formal staff appraisals had only recently been introduced, and not all staff would have been through this process when the questionnaires were completed.
2. These training responses may be a little skewed as 11 respondents failed to indicate the number of days training they have received in the past year.

Values:

1. All responses in this section were extremely high (all above 8.24/11), suggesting a very high perception of performance of BSC in assisting the 'unemployed and disadvantaged people from the local community'.
 - last minute planning. This is a regular occurrence which seems to be due to a lack of communication between management and relative staff. (45)
 - I feel the trainers don't have the resources or the support they need. (46)

Objective 1: (To ensure that all key performance indicators in current contracts are reached)

1. 34 staff indicated that maintaining QA at BSC is very successful.
- 2- 31 staff are concerned that there are insufficient 'resources are available to ensure quality delivery' of contracts.

Objective 2: (To diversify business opportunities by utilising core assets and capabilities)

1. Many staff responded 'don't know' in all 4 questions in relation to this objective (up to 15 staff in one question) indicating a lack of knowledge by general staff in regards possible business opportunities for BSC. (This is probably not really a concern?)

Objective 3: (Maintain and develop staff who have empathy for the client base of BSC and who understand the trends in the Humans Services Industry)

1. All responses in this area are above average (3.46-3.97) indicating a positive perception of staff choice, training opportunities and a supportive work environment at BSC.

Objective 4: (To provide and maintain modern infrastructure and technology that is capable of meeting the demands of future expansion)

1. Almost equal number numbers of staff agree / disagree and are unsure that (1) staff are kept abreast of changes through conference attendance and training programs and (2) BSC is current with latest IT trends and maintaining an efficient IT register.

Additional responses: (Please add any further suggestions you may wish to make...)

- It seems to have taken staff morale to hit rock bottom before management has taken action. CEO still refuses to see problem & until this happens I don't believe changes will happen. (8)
- Our hand and power tools are ageing and will need a lot of attention ie. Money spent on them. (13)
- Certainly up to date with latest trends. Don't know if IT register is set up but presume so. (21)
- Staff running programs are not utilised enough when tendering. The process between

- writing a submission & actually putting a program into place is causing problems. (26)
- The general facilities are showing signs of deterioration because funds are not easily available. We used to keep high standard to show respect to participants and staff. They are worth it!! (27)
 - You need bigger envelopes for these surveys!! (41)
 - I believe BSC does do what we say we do. There is always room for improvement at times staff get stressed and miscommunication happens. Generally I believe most staff like working here and can move within the organisation sideways and at times to higher positions. (43)
 - Replace all inferior, ill maintained equipment and purchase some other specialized tools so other projects can be taken on. (44)

Notes:

- *All comments have been printed exactly as written by staff_ inclusive of some spelling and grammatical errors so as not to alter the intent of their statements.*
- *Averages given on the survey responses must be looked at in totality with the invalid and 'don't know (OK)' answers.*
- *Attention is drawn to the very high % of invalid/DK responses in the Specific Objectives section and reasons why staff may have responded in this manner.*

Collation of Survey results prepared by Anne Braund (ABC Consultants).

Clients and Key Stakeholders – Collation of responses.

10 Client Groups	No. of respondents
A. Parents of Clients	4
B. Current Clients (1 page questionnaire)	29
C. Current Clients (2 page questionnaire)	23
D. Previous Training Clients	8
E. Community Visitors Program Volunteers	30
F. JPET Clients	9
G. Key Stakeholder Organisations	8
H. Associated Organisations or organisations we have Membership with	1
I. Independent Recyclers' Workers	16
J. Green Corps Participants	18
Total Respondents	146

Comments from Clients and Key Stakeholders Compiled June 2004

Total respondents – 146.

A – Parents of Clients (4 Respondents)

Q 1. - Are there other services or help you would have expected to get from BSC but which has not been provided? (2 – yes; 1 – no; 1 – N/R)

- I would like to see staff ringing employers eg. Councils for traineeships for normal and handicap (sic) persons instead of waiting for them to come to you.
- Having a child with a disability I would like a little more feedback on [process in place of me ringing]. (sic)
- Other than that I feel confident in Skill Centre as a whole.
- More extensive support for clients of Independent Recyclers.

Comments on the range or the qualities of the services offered by BSC:

- As a parent of a young person with a disability, I would find it helpful to receive information regarding prospective job opportunities. This would assist us greatly. Keep up the good work.
- If and when sending a person for a job interview that has limited understanding, I feel someone should go along as there (sic) voice or to make sure the person understands what is needed of them.
- It is difficult to respond to this survey. We receive little (if any) direct communication from the Skills Centre staff employed at Independent Recyclers. As the parents of an intellectually impaired son employed at Independent Recyclers we rely on information provided by staff who interact with our son on a daily basis. Sadly, this information is not forthcoming. The bi-monthly “carers” meetings would be much more useful if the opportunity to discuss our concerns with these staff members was possible.

Also: the regular turnover of people identified as “support staff” makes it difficult for the clients to understand who is supposed to be helping them with what. This, combined with the limited communication mentioned above causes us (as parents trying to support our son & understand his daily activities) concern & confusion.

B - Current Clients (1 page questionnaire) (29 Respondents)

Q 12 – How did you hear about the services of BSC?

- Skill Centred Qld
- CHR
- Wide Bay Group Training service
- Centrelink
- Queensland Government
- Monto High School
- Traineeship x 7

- My trainee (sic) told me I had to get 2 a week.
- From Work / through present employers x 7
- From another employee doing a course there / fellow work associate who is studying to same course x 2
- I have completed a Community Jobs Plan program through Skills Ctre
- Through Skill Centre
- Signs

Any further suggestions you may wish to make which would improve our performance.

- Off campus students feel they do not get enough support or motivation.
- I don't have any suggestions. I think everyone is doing a great job. I will actually miss the time I have spent there.
- Government / Non government all useless. Just in it for the money and don't give a shit about struggling people.
- Overall good training facility.
- The lady's (sic) down at front desk should smile a bit more, and not be so grumpy. Thank you.
- I nearly fall asleep in the training rooms. I think there should be music or something. It can be 2 quiet!
- I feel as though there is a great lack of communication between myself and my trainer. I believe it should be the trainer's responsibility to organise a time for assessment rather than mine and I do look upon this as quite a poor practice.
- I enjoyed doing my traineeship at your place. Rick Johnstone was very friendly and helped me if I had any troubles. I applaud Rick Johnstone and I would give your place 100%. Thank you for helping me get a Certificate II in business.
- The activities are a bit repetitive and I lose motivation because of this, try making them more enjoyable? More case studies, less comprehension. More research – internet activities, etc.
- I could not answer a lot of questions as I have minimal dealings as I am based in Brisbane and have not been to the centre. What I have experienced has been great.
- As I have been based in Brisbane some of these questions are irrelevant. But I have been pleased with the support and assistance I have received. As Bundaberg Skill Centre was the only centre I could find that would allow me to do my particular course by correspondence and self paced, I am very pleased with the support I receive.

C – Current Clients (2 page questionnaire) (23 Respondents)

Q 14 – How did you hear about the services of BSC?

- Newspaper / Newspaper advertisement x 8
- Friend x 8
- Leaflet picked up from Neighbourhood Centre
- “someone write to me and the organisation”
- word of mouth
- through Manager at Wide Bay Group Training service
- Centrelink x 3
- “I heard it from the Bundaberg Skills Centre”
- “I sought it out years gone by in their first premises”

Any further suggestions you may wish to make which would improve our performance.

- Computer room air not fresh, gets too “stuffy”. Chairs in the computer room difficult to adjust.
- Probably not jump from subject to subject which leads to confusion.
- I thank you (all the staff and teachers) for a very commendable attitude you all have towards the students especially the young people and people of non-English speaking background. You all made us more confident with ourselves. Thank you.
- About smoking area.
- A fridge for your lunch would certainly help. As the load of paperwork plus keeping lunch cold gets very heavy.
- I have been very happy with the course so far.
- Thank you very much for your help with me.
- A little improve my performance.
- A staff member came to address us “Moving with the Times” course. I was offended by her swearing although she put her talk across well. Otherwise I felt she didn’t hold up the standard like I expected. This is the only down side.
- More typing rooms.
- The Bundaberg Skills Centre needs more computer (or of the systems). Sometimes we share computer, which sometimes I find it very hard.
- Have a non-smoking area for lunch break.
- All the staff is always help to us. I would like to see one eating area to be smoke free!!

D – Previous Training Clients (8 Respondents)

Q 14 – How did you hear about the services of BSC?

- “From a newspaper advert – but when I spoke of the course to others, lots of people knew of Skills Centre.”
- Newspaper advertisement **x 3**
- “Newspaper ad for course – then staff”
- “Advertisement for a course – in the local paper – Needs to be made more known in the area besides word of mouth.”
- Brochure on the counter of CHR
- Word of mouth
- Friends

Any further suggestions you may wish to make which would improve our performance.

- I was very impressed by the friendliness & helpfulness of ALL staff (not just those associated with my course). Also I saw first hand how several people were given assistance to overcome difficulties to gaining employment. The staff made me feel that each one of us mattered personally – not just as a statistic in a class. They made me feel it was important to them that a positive outcome was achieved for me (and by me) with as much assistance as they could give. Thank you.

PS. The name (Bundaberg Skills Centre) is a bit confusing. Lots of people think it is Skill Centred Regional.

- I cannot understand why some applicants are approved to undertake training at your Centre when it is blatantly obvious that their heart (and brain) is not “with it”!!! In the knowledge adventure course conducted in the first half of 2003 – there was such an applicant who openly admitted on more than one occasion that the reason he was there was (quote) “...to get *** Centrelink off his back...”. His disruptive behaviour, rude comments and lack of personal hygiene should not have been tolerated. He showed total lack of respect for fellow students and his trainer! Whatever the reason he was approved, it should not have been to boost your statistic figures!
- I was absolutely happy with all aspects of Skills Centre.
- Sandra is a wonderful teacher, is very approachable and understanding.
- A very friendly, professionally run organisation. All staff are always ready to help and support. Sandra Hansen is an excellent trainer.

E – Community Visitors Volunteers (30 Respondents)

Q 12 – How did you learn about the existence of BSC?

- On suggestion from a job agency, I completed a Cert III in Aged Care. Therefore learnt about volunteering
- Done course at Skills Centre **x 3**
- Through training programs
- Through Centrelink / Centrelink referral for aged care course **x 3**
- Word of mouth **x 2**

- Friend **x 8**
- Employment agency **x 3**
- I was told of the need for volunteers from my brother
- Phone call
- Ad in newspaper **x 3**
- Daughter was doing a course there and told me
- Through (staff member) at (aged care facility) **x 2**
- Through work at Aged care facility

Q 15 – Are there any activities you could suggest which could improve the Community Visitors program? (4 – yes; 20 – no; 6 – N/R)

- What about cross stitching cards for Christmas / Easter / Jams lids or special occasions or charities.
- Something involving visiting sick people – esp. children to entertain or chat with them / more courses like writing for a living, art, music, drama, other job search activities.
- Bar Canteen Recreation room Pokies (joke)
- Have more photos and people in the free newspaper. The more people see the more people will become involved.
- To have a room set aside as a library / information room for all to access.

Any further suggestions you may wish to make which would improve our performance.

- I always enjoy the company of the staff in the community visitors program and extremely confident and proud to have Bundy Skills Centre to go to for in need of job and any help. Cheers! God bless you all.
- The staff are friendly and helpful.
- Update circulars regarding dementia, Parkinsons disease, diabetes, strokes and other aspects of aged care.
- Would be nice to have a permanent venue just for community visitors.
- I am very happy with the organisation and Gwyn Bishop is an exceptionally skilled lady with just the right attitude.
- Keep up the good work!
- I live in Childers and only know of the Bundaberg Skills Centre through the Visitors Scheme and have not been to your office so some questions I could not answer the questionnaire properly.

F – JPET Clients (9 Respondents)

Q 14 – How did you find out about BSC?

- School x 2
- Friend x 3
- Centrelink
- (Staff member) from Bays
- (Staff member) from Bundaberg Centre for Student Development

Any ideas you may have which would make Bundaberg Skills Centre a better place to attend:

- Free food
- I don't have any ideas for Skills Centre because it is good as it is now.
- Nothing because it is the best place.
- Build a basketball court and have more facilities.

G – Key Stakeholder Organisations (8 Respondents)

Any comments you may have about the range or the qualities of the services offered by Bundaberg Skills Centre:

- The contact Bundaberg SHS has with Bundaberg Skills Centre is outstanding. Steve Beer is a great operator.
- Matt Nagas – Indigenous Support Officer extremely effective and responsive when assistance sought recently.
- Very happy with the Community Visitors program and the Co-ordinator, Gwyn Bishop.
- Thank you very much for all the services that you offer. You are an asset to the Bundaberg community.
- Gracehaven NH has always encouraged the use of Community Visitors, however I have found that to (sic) often the C.V. doesn't have the staying power required.

H - Associated Organisations or Organisations we have Membership with (1 Respondent)

No comments made.

I – Independent Recyclers Workers (16 Respondents)

No comments requested.

J – Green Corps Participants (18 Respondents)

(All male respondents, aged 17-21 years).

Q. 12 How did you find out about Bundaberg Skills Centre?

- Matt Nagas, School, Skill Centred Qld, Centrelink.
- People.
- Internet.
- My brother was doing JPET a few years ago.
- Bays.
- My mum – she did a course there.
- From parents.
- Danny Tanner.
- Green Corps Advertisement.
- Through friends / Green Corps.
- Family x 2.
- Advertisement in the newspaper x 2.
- Friend x 3.

Q. 15 What ideas do you have which would make BSC a better place to attend.

- Not many people know that bundy skills can assist you in job training and job placement.
- Young people don't think that they can get help with training and job opportunities so they tend to go to other job agencies and training facilities due to lack of knowledge about Skills Centre.
- Maybe go out to the schools and hold some seminars or go the career days.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITES

GOAL: To gain sufficient contracts to achieve financial viable for the organisation			
Objective	Strategies/activities	Social bookkeeping indicators and targets	
		Quantitative	Qualitative
To ensure that all key performance indicators in current contracts are reached in order to guarantee the success of gaining future contracts	<p>Review policies and procedure for the management of contracts to ensure the best practice is in place</p> <p>Ensuring that sufficient staff are employed to maintain high standard of service</p> <p>Ensuring there is sufficient management in place to provide adequate staff supervision</p> <p>Having QA procedures and encourage staff to follow procedures</p> <p>Ensuring staff are trained and skilled in the areas in which they are operating</p> <p>Ensuring that sufficient resources are available to fulfill each contract</p>	<p>No non-compliance orders received from funding bodies as a result of Programs Contract Audits.</p> <p>Reports on staff levels for Strategic planning sessions indicated a need for a change in staff management</p> <p>Changes in Manager's area of supervision resulting from strategic planning sessions to allow for better supervision of staff and programs</p> <p>QA compliance External Audit undertaken resulting in a very positive report.</p> <p>Action taken on non-compliance to the QA System. Internal audit - follow up on non-compliance.</p> <p>Records of staff qualification indicated that all staff members have required qualifications to deliver program.</p> <p>Record show funds expended on upgrading qualifications and attendance at training seminars and conferences.</p> <p>Audit of Contract Performances do not indicate any criticism of resources</p>	<p>Surveys of Stakeholders showed that BSC provided services of a high standard</p> <p>Clients assessment of courses indicated high level of satisfaction with staff performance and number</p> <p>Records of Senior Management Meetings to ascertain effectiveness of new supervision carried out by senior staff</p> <p>34 staff indicated that maintaining QA at BSC is very successful in achieving positive outcomes</p> <p>Records of non-compliance to the QA and action taken</p> <p>Audit of Training activities by External Auditors do not indicate any non-compliance in relationship to staff qualifications.</p> <p>31 staff are concerned that there are insufficient resources available to ensure quality delivery of contracts</p>

GOAL: To develop diverse business opportunities			
Objective	Strategies/activities	Social bookkeeping indicators and targets	
		Quantitative	Qualitative
To diversity business opportunities to enable the organisation to be less reliant on government funding by utilising core assets and capabilities	Encourage staff to suggest possible business opportunities that fit with mission, skills and assets	Regular meetings of the Investments Sub-committee for exploring and developing business opportunities	Minutes of Sub-committee Meetings (Approx 3-4 meetings annually)
	Liaising with business developing units at State, Federal and Local Government and Development Boards	Appointment of a Business Development Officer Strategic Planning Sessions Records of meetings between Management Staff and various bodies	Reports from Business Development Officer Minutes of Strategic Development Sessions Board Meeting Reports
	Checking that new business opportunities are not unfair competition for existing business	Consultation records of Development Officer with local businesses.	Board meeting Reports

GOAL: Bundaberg Skills Centre to develop financial reserves to provide security in an uncertain market			
Objective	Strategies/activities	Social bookkeeping indicators and targets	
		Quantitative	Qualitative
Recognising the unstable income environment we work in to generate and maintain adequate reserve to withstand sudden or significant changes in income	Identifying all foreseeable expenses and set aside sufficient funds to deal with them	Meetings of the Investments and Audit Sub-committees from April 2003 to 2004	Minutes of the Investments and Audit Sub-Committee Meetings
	Preparing annual projections of income and expenditure	Meetings with Auditor	Budget Documents Financial Documents including Cash Flow and Profit and Loss Statements for the financial year 2003/4
		Meetings of the Audit Sub-committee from April 2003 to 2004	Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee Meetings Board Meetings
	Determining what reserves need to be held to cover significant changes in income	Meeting of the Audit Sub-Committee from April 2003/2003	Budget Documents Financial Documents including Cash Flow and Profit and Loss Statements for the financial year 2003/2004 Budget Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee Meetings

GOAL: To provide a supportive and caring environment for clients			
Objective	Strategies/activities	Social bookkeeping indicators and targets	
		Quantitative	Qualitative
<p>Maintain and develop Staff who have empathy for the clients base of Bundaberg Skills Centre and who understand the trends in the Human Service Industry</p>	<p>Attracting suitable staff through marketing of vacancies and providing attractive salary packages</p>	<p>Evidence of published vacancy notices in newspapers</p>	<p>Records show that the number of people applying for a position at BSC is high</p>
		<p>Data Documents on salaries levels in Human Services Industry</p>	<p>Client surveys indicate that staff were rated highly as giving support to clients</p>
		<p>Data on Salary Levels</p>	<p>Clients exit surveys indicate satisfaction with staff performance.</p>
		<p>Subscription to Industrial Relations Consultant Service</p>	<p>Staff surveys indicate a positive perception of training opportunities.</p>
	<p>Careful selection of staff to ensure they have a understanding and empathy for the Client base</p>	<p>Documents relating to staff selections</p>	
	<p>Budget allocation for staff training to be not less than 5% of wage budget</p>	<p>Budget allocation for year 2003/2004 and Financial expenditure record of staff training</p>	
	<p>Staff Meeting incorporate a training segment</p>	<p>Record of staff meeting indicating training component</p>	<p>Staff surveys indicated training component at Staff Meetings</p>
<p>Providing a work environment that is supportive of staff, and maintain wages and conditions to a standard that is at least equal to similar employment opportunities</p>	<p>Subscription to Industrial Relations Consultant Service with access to a consultant re staff issues.</p>	<p>In staff survey all averages for staff support were above 3.62 indicating an above average feeling of support at BSC</p>	
<p>Appointment of staff training officer to undertake regular staff analysis and identifies and implement suitable training within budget</p>	<p>Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer frequent attendance at Conferences and training sessions relating to conditions in the Human Service Industry</p>	<p>31 Staff out of 46 surveyed indicated that surveys agreed that my health and well being at work is taken seriously by BSC – 12 respondents disagreed</p>	
	<p>Appointment of Staff Training Officer and evidence of analysis and training activities for staff</p>	<p>Staff Training Record</p>	

GOAL: To be an innovative organisation that is capable of meeting future expansion			
Objective	Strategies/activities	Social bookkeeping indicators and targets	
		Quantitative	Qualitative
To ensure that we provide and maintain modern infrastructure that is capable of meeting the demands of future expansion	Having a policy and budget allocation to replace IT equipment regularly	Budget Documents Expenditure on IT Records Assets Register QA Policy on IT Equipment	Clients surveys indicated that IT equipment was rated highly
	Creating a new position for a resource officer to ensure that assets are secure and maintain in working condition	Resource Officer Reports Maintenance record	Stakeholders' Surveys indicated that almost equal numbers of staff agree/disagree and are unsure about BSC is current with latest IT trends and maintaining an efficient IT Asset Register
	Keeping staff abreast of change by attendance at conferences and training programs	Records of Specialists Staff attendance at Conference and Training Sessions	Reports from staff of attendance at Conference
	Replacing at least one third of computers each year ensuring that no computers are more than 3 years old	Entries on the Assets Register	Expenditure records on computers
	Keeping current with latest trends by developing in efficient information technology register	Current Software Register	Almost equal number of staff agree/disagree and are unsure that BSC is current with latest IT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Bundaberg Skills Centre complies with all relevant environmental legislation and monitors all environmental impact on our business.

Bundaberg Skills Centre is involved in managing and offering environmental training in relationship to Green Corps projects, and operates a recycling plant in conjunction with the Bundaberg City Council. This means that the organisation has policies which

- Minimise all waste that arises from the operation of our business.
- Seeks to recover, reuse and recycle as much as is economically practical and to ensure that the remainder is disposed of in a responsible way.
- Influence suppliers of services and goods to reduce their own impact upon the environment.
- Enhance awareness about relevant issues amongst staff, clients, volunteers, and others who have an interest in our business.

COMPLIANCE

Bundaberg Skills Centre complies with

- Workplace Health and Safety Regulations - Bundaberg Skills Centre Inc operates under the Workplace Health and Safety Act, 1995. While most activities undertaken at Bundaberg Skills Centre are not inherently dangerous, industrial hazards are evident if adequate safeguards and precautions are not exercised.
- Equal Opportunity Legislation - Bundaberg Skills Centre recognises the right of all staff, individuals and groups to have a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation, hurt, harassment and discrimination. Bundaberg Skills Centre is committed to promoting equal opportunity in learning and employment in recognition of the principles of equity and social justice and in conforming with the spirit and intent of equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation. Bundaberg Skills Centre promotes equal opportunity in all aspects of activities and as an integral part of all Bundaberg Skills Centre policies and practices.
- Freedom of Information Legislation - Bundaberg Skills Centre provides clients with the opportunity to access their personal information and where appropriate correct that information if they determine that it is incorrect.
- Privacy Act Legislation - Bundaberg Skills Centre is committed to protecting the privacy of participants personal information. POL021 policy sets out the way personal information is handled, including the use and disclosure of personal information, as well as right to access.
- Anti-Discrimination Legislation - Bundaberg Skills Centre is committed to ensuring that it meets its legal and moral obligations with respect to anti-discrimination legislation. It will not tolerate any discrimination including both direct and indirect discrimination that disadvantages an individual and/or groups in the employment and/or learning environment. Bundaberg Skills Centre seeks to meet the needs of individuals, and the community as a whole through the integration of access and equity guidelines. We will ensure that equity principles for all people are implemented through the fair allocation of resources and the right to equality of opportunity without discrimination. Bundaberg Skills Centre will strive to increase opportunities for people to participate in the vocational education and training system, government funded programs and in associated decisions which affect their lives.
- Disability Legislation - Bundaberg Skills Centre ensures that each person with a disability who is seeking assistance has access to a service on the basis of relative need and available resources. Bundaberg Skills Centre will ensure that the Disability Support Program contract in assisting people whose disability affects their ability to work and improving outcomes for people with disabilities is executed in line with FACS Guidelines and Contractual obligations, the Disability Services Act and within the Disability Service Standards.

MAIN ISSUES, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Social Accounting process showed in general that Bundaberg Skills Centre has been able to live up to the Vision to be a quality provider of employment and learning opportunities for the community and in particular disadvantaged and unemployed people including People with a Disability.

The results of questionnaires among all the groups surveyed showed an overwhelming support for Bundaberg Skills Centre and numerous comments were made about the supportive environment. The philosophy has always been to be supportive of individuals who were seeking employment regardless of their ability and background and to create a caring atmosphere. The constant changing requirements of Government programs and the emphasis on outcomes, which at times conflicted with the needs of the clients, has created difficulties. So it is rewarding after undertaking this survey to find that Bundaberg Skills Centre has been able to maintain a high standard of integrity and successfully achieve the goals of its Mission and Vision statements.

One of the issues which has become apparent during Social Accounting is that the perceived special needs of some client groups were not being met. This is due to the diversity of programs and clients accessing the centre. For example the Community Visitors program requested its own permanent room with library facilities. This is outside the intention of the program but it does raise some interesting questions about responding to the needs of this client group, who often stay with the program for many years.

The programs for People with Disabilities raised the issue of providing more information to the parents and carers. Bundaberg Skills Centre recently took responsibility for this program, which was previously managed by an organisation whose only business activity was in Disability related services. The change in management coincided with the Government funding body (DFaCS) implementing numerous changes. These changes related to employment conditions and have created anxiety among the clients, their parents and carers. However progress has been made and increased communications between staff, clients, parents and carers has improved. Resources are still being directed to improve performance and communication. The Disability services programs recently passed an external Audit required by the funding body and achieved the highest rating with no non-compliance orders issued.

In response to concerns raised by the Board of Directors, regarding their low level of knowledge of the organisation, governance and variety of programs conducted, training sessions have been implemented. Some Directors have also participated in Board Governance training offered by an external facilitator.

The issues raised by the staff re facilities and planning have been investigated and changes have been made. Staff was not fully aware of

the strategic objectives of organisation but this was because the CEO felt it was her duty to implement the objectives and she did not have sessions with the staff outlining the strategy plan. This has since been undertaken at staff training sessions.

In conclusion the Social Accounting process has been a worthwhile undertaking and has demonstrated that Bundaberg Skills Centre is maintaining its founding beliefs and operating according to the principals laid down in the Mission and Vision statements.

Problems of the Social Accounting Process

The major problem faced with the Social Accounting Process was it took over a year to complete. This was because it was undertaken on a part time basis but it is difficult in an organisation to find the resources for such an undertaking on a full time basis. This means that by the time the report is finished some of the information is no longer relevant.

The costs associated with the Audit are hard to calculate when the process began so long ago and expenses have been higher than envisaged.

The questionnaires developed were successful in that most groups answered all the questions, which provided sufficient information for the audit. There has been a stated need for the questionnaires to be changed and to have different questions in particular relating to the staff. However focus groups would have added depth to the process.

Proposal for the next Social Audit Cycle

It is envisaged that there will be a follow up to this social audit and that there will be changes to the way the questionnaires are developed and possible inclusion of focus groups.

Publication and Disclosure

It is proposed that the Social Accounting Report be distributed at the Bundaberg Skills Centre's Annual General Meeting in September 2004. Other organisations in the labour market field have expressed an interest in the audit and plans have been made to distribute the results through the networks. Local Councils and other community organisations, including the local media will receive information about the audit.

ATTACHMENT 1 – QUESTIONNAIRES

ATTACHMENT 2 – SURVEY RESULTS