Performance report: In early childhood
Our outcome

All children will receive high quality early childhood education and care to give them a great start in life and at school.

Our performance targets

- Ensure all children have access to quality early childhood education in the year before school by 2013
- Ensure that at least 95 per cent of four-year-olds attend preschool two days a week
- Increase the proportion of children with the literacy and numeracy skills they need for the best start at school

Our priorities

High expectations, closing the gaps
- Increasing access to preschool
- Giving young children the best start at school

Quality teaching and leadership
- Implementing the National Quality Framework
- Building the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators

Better ways of doing business
- Reviewing the funding of early childhood education
Our performance targets

Ensure all children have access to quality early childhood education in the year before school by 2013

Participation in early childhood education programs continued to rise. During 2011, 88.9 per cent of children were enrolled in an early childhood education program.

Participation rates for the state’s most vulnerable families also increased, with 93.1 per cent of disadvantaged children enrolled in an early childhood education program in 2011, an increase of 9.3 percentage points since 2010. Similarly, there was a seven percentage point increase in the number of Aboriginal children enrolled in a program between 2010 and 2011.

Ensure that at least 95 per cent of four-year-olds attend preschool two days a week

On average, children attended preschool for 2.31 days per week in 2011. This represents an average preschool attendance of 13.8 hours per week for each child, not including participation in long day care, which accounts for the enrolment of most preschool age children in NSW.

Increase the proportion of children with the literacy and numeracy skills they need for the best start at school

Results from the Best Start Kindergarten assessment in 2012 showed that 93 per cent of students achieved Level 1 or higher on at least one aspect of the numeracy assessment and 80 per cent achieved Level 1 or higher at least one aspect of the literacy assessment. These results have remained stable since 2010.

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1 Commonwealth data for 2012 is not yet available.
2 Commonwealth data for 2012 is not yet available.
High expectations, closing the gaps

Increasing access to preschool

In October 2012, the Minister for Education announced measures aimed at supporting access to preschool, particularly those serving our most disadvantaged communities. Over $30 million in funding was earmarked for a number of programs to be rolled out in 2013, including:

- a fee-reduction package to help children of disadvantaged families access their community preschool at no charge for up to two years at selected Connected Communities locations
- infrastructure and outreach funding to boost access to preschool at Connected Communities locations
- incentives to help early childhood providers adjust the way they deliver their services to achieve a minimum of 15 hours of preschool education for each child
- scholarships for up to 100 early childhood educators to upgrade their qualifications
- improved transfer of information about the learning and development needs of each child as they move from an early childhood setting to school
- a trial of arrangements where services can pool their governance and support functions.

Giving young children the best start at school

The Best Start assessment is designed to identify each student’s literacy and numeracy ability at the beginning of Kindergarten. In 2012, Best Start was conducted in all NSW public schools with primary enrolments. This involved more than 65,000 children and over 3,700 teachers.

To support the assessment, we implemented software for Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers to generate early learning plans to address the individual literacy and numeracy needs of each student.

We created 120 full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching positions, which allowed us to grant release time to expert teachers so they could deliver literacy and numeracy programs. Our teachers provided Reading Recovery support to more than 10,000 students who were having difficulty in learning to read and write. We expanded the Targeted Early Numeracy (TEN) intervention program out to 529 schools and trained over 3,000 Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers. Our 64 Language, Learning and Literacy (L3) facilitators trained 990 Kindergarten teachers to assist students who struggled on the Best Start literacy assessment.

We also developed and applied tools and resources to identify gifted and talented students and extend them in their first years of school.
Quality teaching and leadership

Implementing the National Quality Framework

This was a significant year in the implementation of the National Quality Framework (NQF) under the National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care. The NQF aims to improve the quality and consistency of early childhood education and care across Australia.

The NQF includes an integrated and uniform approach to the regulation, approval and quality assessment of services. The national laws came into effect on 1 January 2012 and now apply to around 5,000 services in NSW, including long day care centres, preschools, kindergartens, family day care services and more than 1,000 outside school hours care services (which were not previously subject to NSW Government regulation).

The NQF also sets a new national benchmark (the National Quality Standard) to rate and assess the quality of services. The standard covers educational programs and practice, the health and safety of children, the suitability of facilities and the physical environment, staffing arrangements, support for children, their families and communities, the quality of leadership and service management.

In June 2012, we began to assess and rate the quality of NSW services against the standard. This was a significant new responsibility and a major undertaking. We trained our assessors using a package developed by the University of Melbourne in consultation with all state and territory regulators. We were the first regulator to issue an assessment and rating report and had visited over 790 services by the year’s end.

In the second half of 2012, an independent evaluation of the assessments and ratings was undertaken to validate the process and the credibility of the ratings before they were published. The Australian Council for Educational Research provided its report to state and territory ministers in December 2012. On the basis of its findings, ministers agreed that the ratings should be published in 2013. Parents will then be able to judge the quality of services and service providers will have a framework to guide continuous improvement and deliver better outcomes for children.

During the year, we continued to monitor compliance with legislative requirements, investigate complaints and respond to incidents as they occurred. These activities, which involved around 1,500 visits to service providers, were underpinned by an extensive campaign to educate the sector about the new NQF. We worked in close partnership with the national authority, the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and held a series of joint public forums around NSW. Our inquiry service played a central role in our communication with families and services. In 2012, we responded to over 31,700 telephone inquiries, 8,180 email inquiries and handled over 3,340 regulatory notifications from service providers.

Building the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators

Highly skilled and qualified staff are essential to providing high-quality education and care and achieving the best outcomes for children. To support this, the NQF progressively mandates new qualification requirements for educators. At the end of 2011, we launched the New Skills: Quality Care training strategy. In 2012, we assisted unqualified educators by providing subsidised access to courses. We funded 608 educators to study for an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) certificate III qualification and another 351 educators to study a full diploma course.

One of the initiatives announced by the NSW Minister for Education in October 2012 was to make scholarships available for 100 educators to upgrade their qualifications in early childhood to degree level. The scholarships will be rolled out in 2013 and will give priority to educators working in disadvantaged areas.

We conducted a series of information sessions on the NQF and distributed a regular bulletin on key regulatory issues and processes that the sector needed to be aware of. Our efforts received a very positive response from the sector.

We worked to ensure that staff in all 100 government preschools received the support they needed to develop their knowledge and skills. We ran a series of professional learning workshops, focusing on specific areas within the National Quality Standard. The workshops were delivered by early childhood specialists and were attended by more than 150 preschool teachers and 140 support staff, school executives and principals. We also designed and rolled out an interactive tool to help teachers assess themselves against the national standard and develop plans to improve the service they provide.
New and better ways of doing business

Reviewing the funding of early childhood education

In 2012, we continued to support a major review of funding for early childhood education. The Minister for Education announced the review in August 2011 to address inequity and unnecessary complexities in the way the current system is funded and make recommendations on how funding reforms could help families of young children access quality learning and care. The independent review was conducted by respected social policy academic Professor Deborah Brennan.

Professor Brennan submitted her final report to the Minister in April 2012. We were then tasked with testing the recommendations against actual service data that was not available at the time of the review. Using new data we collected specifically for this purpose, we have begun detailed modelling of the early childhood education sector and testing the impact of the review’s funding scenarios.

We have continued to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government to secure a long-term funding commitment for the sector after the current national partnership agreement expires in 2013. The negotiations are expected to be finalised early in 2013, paving the way for the NSW Government to finalise its reforms and release its response to the Brennan Review.
Performance report: At school
Our outcome

All students will get the teaching and support they need to learn, achieve and progress.

Our performance targets

- Ensure participation of students in national (NAPLAN) tests exceeds the national average
- Increase the proportion of students at and above the national minimum standard for reading and numeracy
- Increase the proportion of students in the top two performance bands for reading and numeracy
- Halve the gap in reading and numeracy by 2018
- Ensure that 90 per cent of young people have attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate II or above by 2015
- Ensure that 90 per cent of young people have attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate III or above by 2020, including those in regional NSW
- Halve the gap in educational attainment for young Aboriginal people by 2020
- Improve Year 12 completion rates for students in disadvantaged schools
- Increase the number of teachers with higher level professional accreditation
- Ensure 60 per cent of school students with a disability have a personalised learning and support plan by 2020

Our priorities

High expectations, closing the gaps
- Supporting students with disabilities, learning and behavioural difficulties
- Closing the gap in educational outcomes for Aboriginal students
- Rethinking how education and other services are delivered to Aboriginal communities
- Supporting students from disadvantaged communities
- Improving literacy and numeracy standards
- Helping students transition from primary to secondary school
- Improving student attendance
- Encouraging students to stay in school
- Supporting successful transitions to further education, training and employment

Quality teaching and leadership
- Attracting and recruiting the highest quality teachers
- Ongoing professional development for our school teachers and principals
- Supporting quality teaching
- Recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching
- Ensuring the welfare of our students

Better ways of doing business
- Increasing local decision-making
- Reforming the way we finance and staff our schools
- Improving our school facilities and infrastructure
- Supporting technology and innovation in learning
- Improving administrative and information management systems
Our performance targets

Ensure participation of students in national (NAPLAN) tests exceeds the national average

NSW participation in NAPLAN tests has been consistently higher than all other states and territories (and therefore the national average) at each year level since testing began in 2008.

Figure 1: Participation rate of NSW students in NAPLAN tests compared to the national average in 2012

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1 Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2012, ACARA, Sydney (2012)
Increase the proportion of students at and above the national minimum standard for reading and numeracy

In 2012, the proportion of NSW students achieving at and above the national minimum standard in reading was consistently higher than the national average. In numeracy, NSW students achieved above the national average in Year 3 and Year 5 and at the national average in Year 7 and Year 9.

Between 2008 and 2012, the performance of NSW students in reading in Year 3, Year 5 and Year 7 remained stable. Similarly, there was no significant change in numeracy results for Year 5 and Year 9 students. However, over this period there were statistically significant declines in Year 9 reading, Year 3 numeracy and Year 7 numeracy results.

1 Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2012, ACARA, Sydney (2012)
Increase the proportion of students in the top two performance bands for reading and numeracy

Figure 3: Proportion of NSW students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the top two performance bands for reading and numeracy in 2012

In 2012, the proportion of NSW students achieving in the top two performance bands for reading and numeracy was consistently higher than the national average.

Since 2008, the proportion of NSW students achieving in the top two bands has increased for Year 3, Year 5 and Year 7 students in reading and in Year 5 for numeracy. Since 2010, the performance of Year 3 students in numeracy testing has also improved. However, compared with 2008, a smaller proportion of NSW students achieved in the top two bands for Year 9 reading, Year 7 numeracy and Year 9 numeracy.

1 Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2012, ACARA, Sydney (2012)
Halve the gap in reading and numeracy by 2018

The gap in performance between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in Year 3, Year 5 and Year 7 NAPLAN results for reading has remained virtually unchanged since 2008.

Results for reading in Year 9 and numeracy in Years 3 and 7 show a statistically significant decline in the proportion of Aboriginal students achieving at and above the national minimum standard since 2008. Year 9 numeracy results show a decline in performance between 2008 and 2011, with some improvement in 2012. In 2012, NSW is on track to meet the 2018 closing the gap target for Year 5 numeracy.

Figure 4: Percentage of NSW Aboriginal students achieving at and above the national minimum standard in 2012

Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), NAPLAN Achievement in Reading, Persuasive Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy: National Report for 2012, ACARA, Sydney (2012)
Ensure that 90 per cent of young people have attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate II or above by 2015

Figure 5: Proportion of 20-24 year olds who have attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate II or above

Between 2007 and 2012, the proportion of 20-24 year olds who completed a Year 12 or an AQF qualification at certificate Level II or above rose by an estimated 5.2 percentage points.

Ensure that 90 per cent of young people have attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate III or above by 2020, including those in regional NSW

Figure 6: Proportion of 20-24 year olds who have attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate III or above

The proportion of 20-24 year olds who attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate III or above rose by an estimated 5.1 percentage points between 2007 and 2012. Between 2007 and 2012, the proportion of young people living in rural and regional NSW who had attained the same level of qualification increased by an estimated 0.5 percentage point.

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1 Source: Attainment data for NSW is from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Education and Work (cat. no. 6227.0). Care needs to be taken with the interpretation of survey data as high standard errors can mean differences from year to year are not statistically significant.

2 Source: Attainment data for NSW is from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Education and Work (cat. no. 6227.0). Notes: Rural and regional attainment data are calculated from a sample survey for which there is a known standard error. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has advised that year to year fluctuations are to be expected due to sampling variability. Care needs to be taken with the interpretation of survey data as high standard errors can mean differences from year to year are not statistically significant.
Halve the gap in educational attainment for young Aboriginal people by 2020

In NSW, Aboriginal young people are on track to meet this closing the gap target. In 2011, around 55.9 per cent of Aboriginal people aged 20-24 years had attained a Year 12 or AQF qualification at certificate II or above, equalling the projected 2011 progress point and up from 49.8 per cent in 2006.

Figure 7: The gap in Year 12 or equivalent attainment for Aboriginal 20-24 year olds

The Department’s focus on improving attendance and raising the school leaving age, has had a positive impact on school retention. The apparent retention rate monitors changes in the number of students in public schools who stay on to Year 12. The NSW apparent retention rate for full-time students has increased from 32.2 per cent in 2008 to 43.0 per cent in 2012 for Aboriginal students and from 66.2 per cent to 72.2 per cent for non-Aboriginal students over the same period. The gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students has narrowed from 34.0 percentage points in 2008 to 29.2 percentage points in 2012, indicating that the rate of improvement has been greater for Aboriginal students.

Figure 8: Year 7 to Year 12 apparent retention for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students

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2 Source: Schools Australia, Australian Bureau of Statistics
In 2012, the number of Aboriginal students in NSW public schools completing their Higher School Certificate or a Record of Achievement continued to rise, with a 14.8 per cent increase since 2011.

There has been a substantial improvement in the estimated rate of Year 12 completion for students from low socio-economic backgrounds, rising from 63 per cent in 2010 to 68 per cent in 2011. While improvements have been observed nationally, NSW has been improving at a faster rate. Between 2007 and 2011, Year 12 completion for disadvantaged students improved by five percentage points, compared to three percentage points nationally.

While the rate of Year 12 completion remains lower for students living in low socio-economic status communities, the gap between low and high socio-economic status students narrowed by one percentage point in 2011.

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1 Source: Department of Education and Communities, Office of Education. Data extracted from Board of Studies revised results / participation database. Only students listed as “active” are included in the figures.

Increase the number of teachers with higher level professional accreditation

Accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers at the higher career stages of Professional Accomplishment and Professional Leadership became available to all school teachers in 2008. Accreditation requires teachers to demonstrate they have achieved the relevant teaching standards through a combination of documentary evidence, referee reports and external observation.

In 2012, 133 public school teachers expressed an interest in seeking voluntary accreditation at Professional Accomplishment, with 35 commencing the process with the institute. A further 108 teachers completed a preliminary application at Professional Leadership, with 73 commencing the accreditation process. Teachers have up to three years to complete their submission for accreditation. In 2012, six teachers achieved accreditation at Professional Accomplishment and seven at Professional Leadership.

In 2013, NSW will transition to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Under these standards, teachers will be certified at the higher career stages of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher.

Ensure 60 per cent of school students with disability have a personalised learning and support plan by 2020

We are continuing to work towards this target. We are currently updating the system we use to collect student data to record the number of students with personalised learning and support plans in their schools. This enhancement is due for completion in early 2013.
High expectations, closing the gaps

Supporting students with disabilities, learning and behavioural difficulties

In 2012, more than 740,000 students were enrolled in NSW public schools. Of these students, approximately 90,000 (around 12 per cent) have additional learning and support needs because of disability. We provided additional assistance for around 16,000 of these students in regular classes through our Integration Funding Support Program and more than 19,000 students in specialist classes.

Every Student, Every School is a strategy announced by the NSW Government in March 2012, supported by the More Support for Students with Disabilities National Partnership. This strategy builds the capacity of schools to understand and meet the needs of students with disability. The projects underneath this strategy have a strong focus on professional learning and support for teachers. Key achievements in 2012 include:

- the placement of a specialist learning and support teacher in every regular school across NSW – a total of around 1,800 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers
- over 150 scholarships offered to teachers to complete special education at masters level and a further 200 scholarships to be offered in 2013
- schools for specific purposes (SSPs) provided with assistance to develop networks with local schools.

We are developing a range of accredited professional development courses to ensure all our teachers are aware of their legislative responsibilities and have the capacity to provide adjusted learning and support for students with disability. We are also developing a new functional assessment tool that will help teachers identify where students may benefit from adjustments in the classroom and develop personalised learning and support plans in consultation with students and their parents and carers. We expect all of these resources to be in place by term 3 2013.

The Assisted School Travel Program provides travel to and from school for eligible students with disability who are unable to travel under the School Student Transport Scheme. In 2012, we provided around 2,300 individual transport services a day through contracted service providers to over 10,500 students across NSW. We provided support to families during disruption to the program in term 1 2012, including a hotline that responded to the needs of more than 600 families. An independent review of the program was commissioned and we have implemented all of the recommendations.

To support students with lower-level support needs, every regular NSW public school now receives an allocation of resources for specialist teacher time and annual flexible funding. A formal disability confirmation is not required for students to access this support. Principals determine how these resources are best used to assist teachers and students.

The NSW Centre for Effective Reading provides information about working with students with complex reading difficulties and provides direct specialist assessment and intervention services for primary students in rural and remote communities. In 2012, we guided more than 200 students through the service. The centre’s website provides teaching and learning materials for teachers in public and non-government schools.

In term 1 2012, we launched a new course to support teachers’ understanding of dyslexia and reading difficulties. More than 2,000 staff completed the course this year. We now have 438 trained tutors based across the state. This ensures that our teachers can draw on a range of strategies, develop inclusive reading programs for their classes and make the best use of assistive technology to ensure that students with reading difficulties are not left behind.

Closing the gap in educational outcomes for Aboriginal students

Our ambition is to close the gap in outcomes between Aboriginal students and the broader student population. To this end, we provide additional support for our Aboriginal students, including the following:

- the Norta Norta Program provides tailored learning support to individual students. In 2012, the program:
  - assisted approximately 670 schools to provide learning assistance for 2,227 Aboriginal students in Years 4, 6, 8 and 10
  - provided tutorial assistance for over 3,000 students in Years 11 and 12
- supported independent learning hubs for Aboriginal students in targeted locations
- implemented the Wambinya Early Years Program in 105 schools to assist Kindergarten students with their literacy and numeracy development.

- phase 3 of the Schools in Partnership (SiP) initiative helps schools develop partnerships with parents, communities and government services and maximise educational outcomes for students. The initiative is being run in 69 schools and five communities of schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments.

- phase 2 of the Youth Excel program is being implemented in 10 regional secondary schools. Participating schools employed a full-time Aboriginal community engagement officer to improve student attendance and retention.

- we are funding 312 Aboriginal education officer positions in NSW public schools.

- in partnership with employers including Xstrata Coal and Legal Aid NSW, we continued to provide scholarships for Aboriginal students to support their schooling and participation in vocational education.

By December 2012, over 36,000 Aboriginal students from Kindergarten to Year 12 had a personalised learning plan in place. These plans are developed by schools in collaboration with parents and carers. Plans include targets for learning and strategies that families can use to support their children’s schooling. Our approach is consistent with the objectives and targets of the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014. In 2012, 69 of the 88 focus schools under the national action plan had implemented a school-wide approach to the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy.

Rethinking how education and other services are delivered to Aboriginal communities

The NSW Government launched the Connected Communities strategy in May 2012. The aim of the strategy is to establish networks of schools, local communities and government service providers, using schools as community hubs to create better opportunities for Aboriginal students.

In partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), we selected 15 schools to participate in the strategy. In 2013, these schools will be working with their local communities to teach Aboriginal language and culture and develop personalised learning plans for their students. We are also linking these schools with local providers in health, welfare, childcare, education and training. This model will be a simpler and more coordinated way for these communities to access a range of services.

In 2012, we ran 45 Schools as Community Centres (SaCC) projects in targeted communities. This program also recognises that the school is a shared resource and brings together a range of government services for families with young children in disadvantaged communities. School facilities are used for playgroups, supporting transition to school, early literacy programs, health and nutrition initiatives and parenting programs. Around 4,000 families participated and around three-quarters reported that they accessed a service they had not used before.

Our partnership agreement with the AECG is built on the principles of respect, commitment, collaboration and accountability. It sets out our shared commitments to improve outcomes for Aboriginal learners and ensure that education and training gives due respect to cultural heritage and identity. Regions and schools were encouraged to ratify the agreement with regional and local Aboriginal education consultative groups. By the end of 2012, 474 schools had locally-endorsed partnership agreements in place.

Supporting students from disadvantaged communities

The Priority Schools Program provides additional assistance to school communities to reduce the achievement gap in schools with a high proportion of students from low socio-economic status backgrounds. We provided an additional 280 teaching positions to 579 schools in disadvantaged communities to improve their staff-to-student ratios.
The Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership and Reform Extension Initiative provided funding to improve educational outcomes and transition rates for students in 613 schools. Additional executive positions were created in more than 220 schools. We employed 80 Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs), who helped to improve the quality of teaching in schools through leadership and mentoring. In total, we created 2,895 new teaching and 1,527 non-teaching positions and implemented more than 720 literacy and numeracy programs.

The Country Areas Program provided $4.75 million of additional funding to 222 schools in isolated rural communities, supporting more than 23,000 students.

Improving literacy and numeracy standards

The NSW Government is investing $261 million over the five years from 2011 to support students who are most at risk of slipping below minimum standards in literacy and numeracy.

The Ministerial Advisory Group on Literacy and Numeracy was established to provide advice on the implementation of the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan. Under the expert leadership of Dr Ken Boston AO, the advisory group recommended a plan of action to boost the literacy and numeracy of students. Our Early Action for Success program is based on the advisory group’s recommendations and resources are directed to primary schools that national (NAPLAN) testing shows have the greatest needs. In 2012, over $15 million was allocated to implementing the action plan.

We use the Best Start Kindergarten assessment to gather consistent, accurate and reliable information about the knowledge, skills and understandings that each child brings with them to school. The progress of students is tracked against literacy and numeracy benchmarks. This allows teachers to identify students who would benefit from additional attention in regular classroom teaching, as well as students with more complex literacy and numeracy needs who require extra assistance in small groups or intensive one-on-one support.

A key feature of Early Action for Success is the appointment of instructional leaders in identified schools. We appointed 50 of these specialists in 2012. They are now working in their schools to help improve outcomes for students who are struggling to meet expected standards in literacy and numeracy.

We evaluated eight of the programs we implemented under the National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy and published the outcomes in 2012. We found that the implementation had a positive impact on students, teachers and schools. Students were more interested and enthusiastic to learn and student outcomes improved.

Helping students transition from primary to secondary school

Moving into secondary school is a critical time for students and a major stepping stone on the way to adulthood. In 2012, we distributed $2.8 million to schools to help students make a successful transition from primary to secondary schooling. Our strategies included sharing stories from schools that successfully maintained a continuity of learning into the first year of secondary school, approaches to a more integrated curriculum and ways that schools can work with students and their parents to help them through this challenging period.

We allocated an additional $310,000 to 16 learning communities across 91 primary, secondary and central schools to implement a whole-school initiative on teaching in the middle years. We developed a transition matrix to help these schools plan effective transition programs.

Improving student attendance

Regular attendance and engagement is critical to educational success and students with poor patterns of attendance are at risk of limiting their choices later in life.

Changes to legislation in 2012 have provided more options to resolve problems with attendance before resorting to prosecution action against a parent or truanting child. The changes recognised that there are a wide range of factors that contribute to students not attending school. We introduced the option of compulsory conferences with students to identify the barriers they face and to identify what can be done to restore their participation in education or training. Compulsory
schooling orders can now be imposed by the Children’s Court as well.

To support these changes, we trained more than 60 new conference convenors in 2012 (bringing the total number of convenors to around 150) and provided intensive authorisation training to home school liaison officers, Aboriginal student liaison officers and regional staff. We also worked with the Board of Studies, Catholic and independent schools to implement these legislative changes across all school sectors and ensure a common approach to dealing with school attendance issues.

**Encouraging students to stay in school**

In January 2010, the school leaving age was raised from 15 to 17 years of age. Students with higher levels of schooling are more likely to successfully transition to higher education, training or work, but we acknowledge that students need to be able to select from a range of different pathways to education and employment.

In 2011, we commissioned research to obtain feedback from young people directly affected by the changes to the school leaving age. A selection of senior students was interviewed in 12 different schools across the state. Following an initial analysis of the focus group discussions, an online survey was developed to further test the responses. The *New School Leaving Age: Consulting Young People* report was released in January 2012. It showed us that students have a clear understanding of the purpose and requirements of the new school leaving age and an overwhelmingly positive attitude to opportunities to improve their prospects of future education and employment.

We provided targeted support for youth at risk of disengagement through our *Links to Learning* program. The program provided approximately $8 million to non-government organisations and local government authorities. In 2012, around 55 different organisations helped 3,600 students stay on track.

In 2012, 38 secondary teachers completed training as transition advisers to help at-risk students re-engage with learning, plan their education and training goals and prepare for their transition from school. Altogether we have trained around 250 teachers for this role since 2005. We allocated $800,000 to 37 schools to undertake innovative, whole-school initiatives to ensure that students are engaged in education and training.

The School Sport Foundation distributed around $90,000 for 39 grants for students not regularly involved in sport and physical activity and at risk of disengaging from school.

The Department responded to the Audit Office of NSW performance audit on the impact of the raised school leaving age and how well we support young people at school or an alternative pathway, until they reach 17 years of age. The Department continues to consider the recommendations in the context of policy reforms such as *Local Schools, Local Decisions*, curriculum requirements, school management practices and the industrial and employment conditions for NSW teachers. TAFE NSW institutes continue to work in partnership with schools to promote and support the engagement, retention and achievement of young people of compulsory school age.

**Supporting successful transitions to further education, training and employment**

To support the raised school leaving age and ensure that students have a number of avenues for education and training, we allocated more than $2.4 million for students in Years 9 and 10 to undertake vocational education and training (VET) courses. Of the 1,840 students enrolled in VET courses delivered by TAFE NSW, 742 enrolled in an Industry Curriculum Framework (ICF) course. ICFs can be studied as part of the HSC and enable students to acquire a range of technical, personal and organisational skills valuable to work and community life. On successful completion, students receive a nationally recognised Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) credential.

Our independent employment advisers provided mentoring, career advice and employment brokerage to over 1,200 public school students struggling to stay at school in regions of high unemployment.

In 2012, over 14,800 secondary students accessed our *Student Pathways Survey* to kick-start their career and transition planning. The survey provided students with a way to identify
and record their personal career and transition plans. Students also accessed our online career management services, e-Me and Logbook Online to document their goals and identify options for further education and employment to get them there.

Following the release of the HSC results by the Board of Studies, we opened our Careers Advisory Service. This telephone and email service was supported by a website providing school-leavers with information on the career and study options available to them.

Our trade schools and trade training centres in over 250 schools provided students with access to industry-standard training facilities. This encouraged more students to complete their schooling and helped to fill skills shortages and meet emerging local needs. Through the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, we funded approximately 2.5 million hours of work-placement and an additional 350 places for students in Years 9 and 10 to undertake vocational courses.

As a result of our efforts, the Department secured $8.5 million of Commonwealth funding under the national partnership and reward funding of $15.8 million for achieving national targets. This allowed us to secure an additional 350 places for students in Years 9 and 10 in vocational courses and work placements for around 69,000 school students in Years 11 and 12. We also allocated $650,000 of the funding to 12 local projects supporting an additional 11,000 students.
Quality teaching and leadership

Attracting and recruiting the highest quality teachers

In 2012, over 8,180 applicants were approved to teach in NSW public schools. Between term 2 2011 and the end of Term 1 2012, we filled over 4,150 classroom teacher positions, with 61 per cent of these filled through a method chosen by schools.

Since the introduction of the Teacher Education Scholarship program in 2002, 1,210 high-quality teachers (including 188 Aboriginal teachers) have been appointed to areas of workforce need. In 2012, 250 applicants, including 62 Aboriginal students, were offered a scholarship in the 2013 program.

In 2012, we appointed 10 mathematics, three science (physics), 13 special education and three technological and applied studies teachers after they completed the Incentive Scholarship Program. This program was introduced in 2008 to attract high-quality graduates in their final year of study who were not in receipt of any other type of scholarship.

More than 510 teachers completed retraining programs in priority areas including mathematics, science (physics), engineering studies and school counselling.

We continued to work closely with the NSW Institute of Teachers to ensure that teacher training and professional development were consistent with the accreditation requirements for new teachers.

We helped prepare our newly-appointed teachers with induction programs, access to online professional learning and mentoring arrangements. Our Beginning Teachers Support Initiative provided funding to schools equivalent to one hour of relief per week for each permanent on probation beginning teacher in their first year of service. This additional support could be utilised flexibly. For example, the time could be allocated to enable new teachers to participate in professional development, prepare lessons, or seek advice from more experienced teachers. In 2012, this initiative supported almost 3,400 beginning teachers in over 1,260 public schools. In 2011/12, our Teacher Mentor Program provided 50 full-time equivalent mentors to support beginning teachers in 92 schools across NSW.

We offered incentives for school teachers in remote rural schools. These included priority transfers after service commitments had been met, subsidised housing and rental accommodation, retention benefits, additional vacation and leave periods and additional professional development days. In the 2011/12 staffing operation, we appointed 71 classroom teachers, 19 executive staff and five principals through incentive transfers.

Ongoing professional development for our school teachers and principals

All our school teachers and leaders had access to a comprehensive range of courses in 2012. Our professional learning programs are designed to strengthen knowledge and skills in the areas of:

- beginning teachers
- leadership and career development
- quality teaching
- use of information communication and technologies
- welfare and equity
- literacy and numeracy
- implementing the curriculum.

In 2012, we expanded our online management information system (My PL@Edu) so that teachers could maintain a register of their professional learning and made it easier to access online courses. We delivered 700 courses and programs registered by the NSW Institute of Teachers, including 3,230 state-wide registered professional learning sessions covering all elements of the professional teaching standards.

We have also continued to develop our online program for teachers to achieve and then maintain their accreditation with the institute. This professional learning program provides teachers with over 120 hours of online professional learning and was used in over 800 schools. A key element of our learning program is the NSW Quality Teaching model. This model can be applied across all years of schooling and all key learning areas. It provides a common language for teachers to talk about their teaching and encourages teachers to critically reflect on their practice with the aim of improving student outcomes.
In 2012, we also developed the online Leadership Learning program aligned to the roles and key accountabilities of principals. The program consists of 50 hours of professional learning in 15 courses, focusing on leadership, management and continuous improvement. The program enables current and aspiring school leaders to take the first steps to further professional accreditation.

Supporting quality teaching

In July 2012, the Minister for Education released the Great Teaching, Inspired Learning discussion paper. This started a three-month consultation period across the education community about ways we can improve teacher quality in NSW schools. The consultation period resulted in 98 submissions, over 2,800 people engaged in an online forum and 577 comments posted on the site. The NSW Government will announce reforms as a result of this consultation in 2013.

Our literacy and mathematics continua map how we expect children to develop by describing key markers of what students tend to master at each stage of their development. This year we distributed poster-sized versions of the Kindergarten to Year 6 literacy and numeracy continua to all of our primary teachers. We completed the literacy continuum for Year 7 to Year 10 and an interactive online version of the literacy continuum for Kindergarten to Year 10. These are now being used in classrooms across the state to show students the bigger picture of literacy and numeracy learning, illustrate to parents and carers how their children are progressing and assist teachers with planning their lessons and assessment tasks.

We delivered the School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (SMART 2) for schools to interpret NAPLAN and the Year 8 Essential Secondary Science Assessment (ESSA) results. By linking results to the NSW syllabus and a bank of teaching strategies, teachers and schools are better able to analyse learning needs and program accordingly.

For students who were experiencing difficulties with their reading and writing, our teachers accessed a number of intervention programs including Language, Learning and Literacy (L3), Reading Recovery, Focus on Reading and Literacy Lessons. In terms of numeracy skills, our key intervention programs were Targeted Early Numeracy (TEN), Taking off with Numeracy (TOWN) and Count Me In Too.

Recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching

Under the National Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality, we have established 35 Centres for Excellence in NSW public schools. These centres have supported over 150 schools by promoting and demonstrating quality teaching. In 2012, the first tranche of 13 schools completed their formal participation in the national partnership. Each of these schools had access to up to $200,000 to support ongoing implementation of key activities that proved to have the greatest impact on strengthening teacher quality and student outcomes. The second tranche of 22 schools continued operation as Centres for Excellence in 2012 and will complete their formal participation in the national partnership in 2013.

During 2012, an additional cohort of six schools and four communities of schools participated in a year-long teacher quality project, focusing on professional development aligned to teaching standards and support for beginning teachers.

Our Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) positions provide an opportunity for our best teachers to model high-quality teaching for their colleagues. Applicants for these positions are required to complete a successful preliminary assessment at one of the higher voluntary accreditation levels with the NSW Institute of Teachers. Teachers appointed to HAT positions are required to complete their submission for accreditation by the end of their two year appointment. By the end of 2012, 13 teachers (including nine HATs) were the first cohort of NSW public school teachers to be accredited at the higher levels.

Ensuring the welfare of our students

Following our successful trial of 10 new Student Support Officer positions in 2011, we advertised an additional 40 positions in 2012. These officers operate in NSW high schools across the state and support students with anti-bullying and wellbeing strategies. They work to connect students and their families with other services, community activities and support agencies and work with schools on outside school hours programs and excursions. Some of the initiatives that were implemented by our student support officers this year included:
- hosting breakfast clubs each morning on school grounds before school
- assisting at learning hubs, including a weekly after-school homework centre for Aboriginal students
- establishing a girls’ group centred on body image and self-esteem
- stress reduction workshops for senior high school students to help them prepare for the HSC.
Increasing local decision-making

The NSW Premier and the Minister for Education announced the Local Schools, Local Decisions reforms in March 2012. The key features of Local Schools, Local Decisions include:

- shifting decision-making responsibility from head office to the school level
- a new resource allocation model to fund schools directly
- handing responsibility for managing school budgets and filling staff vacancies back to school principals
- salary progression based on attainment of professional standards
- a single school plan, annual report and budget, all linked to student learning outcomes.

This reform will give schools more local authority, while at the same time retaining the benefits of belonging to a strong public education system. We supported principals and executive staff in participating schools with a professional learning program that included leadership skills in a devolved environment, school planning, decision-making, financial management and effective community consultation and engagement.

The Local Schools, Local Decisions reforms are aligned to the Empowering Local Schools National Partnership. In NSW, there are 229 schools participating in the partnership. These schools have been provided with additional funding of up to $50,000 over two years to better respond to the needs of their students and local communities.

Reforming the way we finance and staff our schools

Allowing schools to directly manage an increased percentage of the school budget is a key reform outcome of Local Schools, Local Decisions. In July 2012, the Minister for Education announced a new Resource Allocation Model (RAM), which is a simpler, fairer and more transparent way of distributing government funding to schools. It uses the concept of a base rate plus loading which is consistent with the Commonwealth’s Review of Funding for Schooling (the Gonski review). The RAM takes into account the fact that students and school communities are not all the same, but have different needs and will need different levels of support. Funding for schools reflects complexity as well as student numbers. The RAM builds on educational research and student and school data to allocate funding so that the students and schools with greater need get more resources.

We will continue to test and refine the RAM throughout 2013 to ensure that it works in a variety of settings. The first schools to transition to the RAM will be those participating in the Empowering Local Schools National Partnership.

We have also changed our procurement rules to make it easier for schools to get better value for purchases up to $5,000 by purchasing from local businesses where they offer better value than the state contract. We made changes to annual planned maintenance to give principals more control over decisions such as painting, replacing carpets and repairing roofs. Regional asset management units are now responsible for the delivery of all planned maintenance works, resulting in management fee savings of approximately $6 million in 2012. This was used to provide additional maintenance works in schools.

Under our new model of greater local authority, the needs of students will drive the mixture of staff in our schools. Providing greater opportunities for local selection within a state-wide system was a major focus of the new agreement we signed in 2012 with the NSW Teachers Federation. The new school teacher staffing agreement allows schools to fill at least every second vacancy by local choice, once incentive transfer applicants and Aboriginal employment applicants are placed.

Improving our school facilities and infrastructure

We continued to maintain quality teaching and learning environments through our capital works and asset acquisition programs. We provided $20 million in 2011/12 and 2012/13 for 307 projects in 283 schools from the $40 million Public School Upgrade Program and another $20 million for extra minor maintenance across all NSW public schools.

In the 2011/12 financial year, we improved the physical environments of public schools through the continuation of 41 major works projects, the completion of 28 projects and the
We continued to deliver the Commonwealth’s Building the Education Revolution program, which has provided approximately $3.4 billion for capital works and maintenance projects in NSW public schools. A further 29 projects were delivered under the Primary Schools for the 21st Century component of the program in 2012. Total investment in NSW schools has now reached $3.3 billion. We also started delivering capital works projects in 19 schools for specific purposes (SSPs) with residual funds to improve the learning environments of students with special needs.

We completed 80 projects under the Commonwealth’s Trade Training Centres Program, with a further 24 projects continued under the second and third rounds of the program.

We reviewed our projections of the future asset investment needs of NSW public schools, introduced a new system for delivering major capital works and improved the delivery of minor capital works projects. Increased efficiency and cost savings allowed for additional works to be undertaken. We identified a number of areas of savings and revenue which allowed us to reinvest in school facilities and infrastructure, including:

- a new fee structure with NSW Public Works that realised savings of over $8 million and funded an upgrade of Collarenebri Central School and science laboratories in 11 other schools
- a market for contributions from developers for new schools in Sydney’s growth centres
- negotiation with Canada Bay Council for a school on council-managed land
- an asset disposal program that raised $39.12 million for reinvestment in capital works and maintenance.

We also commenced a review of our School Facilities Standards to provide more flexibility in the way our school facilities are used and development of the Thermal Comfort Sustainability Framework to provide a cost-effective and sustainable approach to improving comfort in all learning spaces.

Supporting technology and innovation in learning

We recognise that innovative approaches to learning are required so that students will be able to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Our NSW Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre continued to publish a range of digital resources for schools. These helped students and teachers become creative and productive users of technology. Over 250 resources linking directly to the curriculum have been created and accessed over 650,000 times.

Under the Commonwealth’s Digital Education Revolution program, all Year 9 to Year 12 students have now been provided with a laptop. This amounts to over 250,000 devices. All schools are assisted with technical support and a peer coaching program to help teachers integrate technology into their classes.

The Commonwealth’s ICT Innovation Fund also funded Pathways for Learning Anywhere Anytime: A network for educators (PLANE). This virtual learning environment for pre-service teachers, in-service teachers and leaders was launched in October 2012 and now has over 4,000 registered users.

Improving administrative and information management systems

The Learning Management and Business Reform (LMBR) program aims to modernise the way we manage and deliver student enrolment and administration, learning management, support services, finance, human resources and technology services. The LMBR program is a critical enabler for other reform initiatives.

In 2009 and 2010, stage one of the program implemented the finance solution into corporate offices and TAFE NSW institutes. In 2011/12, we refined the program to better manage risks, allow sufficient time to engage users and ensure the change was managed effectively.

The first LMBR solution for schools, Budgeting and Planning (Foundation), was deployed to the 229 schools participating in the Empowering Local Schools National Partnership in October
2012. Further solution releases for these schools will occur in 2013, with the remaining schools to be deployed in 2014.

In 2012, we continued to deliver a high-quality and adaptable ICT foundation across our schools through the Technology for Learning Program (T4L). More than 1,000 primary schools were migrated to the new eT4L server and services environment in 2012, which included rebuilding more than 70,000 computing devices. More than 1,000 schools had their local area networks assessed and remediated where required. In 2012, we also commenced development of a new software catalogue to provide easy access to a range of teaching and learning applications. We will begin to roll out the initiative to high schools and our corporate offices in 2013.
Performance report: In tertiary education and training
Our outcome

All students will receive the skills and knowledge for successful participation in employment and their communities, ensuring easier transitions, especially to higher education.

Our performance targets

- Fifty per cent increase in the proportion of people with qualifications at AQF certificate III and above by 2020
- One hundred per cent increase in the number of higher level qualifications at diploma level and above by 2020
- Twenty per cent increase in the number of women, regional and Aboriginal students completing higher level qualifications at AQF certificate III and above by 2020
- Increase the proportion of young people with a bachelor degree or above to 44 per cent by 2025
- Increase the proportion of undergraduate enrolments by students from low socio-economic status backgrounds to 20 per cent by 2020
- Increase the proportion of school leavers participating in further education, training or employment to 90 per cent by 2020
- Increase the number of apprenticeship and traineeship completions by 10 per cent by 2016

Our priorities

High expectations, closing the gaps
- Creating opportunities for people facing barriers
- Ensuring equal opportunities for people with disability
- Improving business and career opportunities for Aboriginal people
- Removing barriers for women to non-traditional occupations
- Targeting training to the needs of rural and regional NSW
- Retraining retrenched workers in regional and rural areas

Quality teaching and leadership
- Recruiting and retaining the highest quality staff at TAFE NSW
- Developing the skills and leadership capability of TAFE NSW staff
- Improving the quality of VET training
- Recognising excellence in teaching and training

Better ways of doing business
- Reforming vocational education and training
- Partnering with industry to meet local skills needs
- Using digital media and technology to deliver flexible, personalised learning options
- Reforming apprenticeships and traineeships
- Collaborating with the Commonwealth, states and territories to harmonise and streamline services
- Building an effective and coordinated tertiary education system
An educated and skilled workforce is crucial to a productive and growing economy. More than ever, it is important we find ways to work collaboratively across government, industry and vocational and tertiary education and training sectors to develop a skills base that meets the current and future needs of NSW.

Fifty per cent increase in the proportion of people with qualifications at AQF certificate III and above by 2020

In 2012, 60.5 per cent of people in NSW aged between 20 and 64 had attained qualifications at Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) certificate III and above. This was an increase of 3.5 percentage points since 2011.

One hundred per cent increase in the number of higher level qualifications at diploma level and above by 2020

In 2010, there were 20,715 completions in vocational education and training (VET) qualifications at AQF diploma level and above. This was an increase of over 4,600 completions since 2009. Of these completions, TAFE NSW had 17,317 (84 per cent).

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1 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Education and Work, Australia, (cat. No. 6227), additional data cubes. Note: Care needs to be taken with the interpretation of survey data as high standard errors can mean that differences from year to year are not significant.

2 Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), National VET Provider Collection. Note: 2010 qualification numbers are preliminary due to lag in reporting. Note: 2011 and 2012 data are not yet available.
Twenty per cent increase in the number of women, regional and Aboriginal students completing higher level qualifications at AQF certificate III and above by 2020

In 2010, women completed 58,651 qualifications at AQF certificate level III and above. This was an increase of over 6,700 completions since 2009. Of these, TAFE NSW had 45,715 (78 per cent of the state’s total completions by women).

There were 34,754 completions by rural and regional students, an increase of 3,100 over the same period. Aboriginal students completed 2,706 qualifications, an increase of over 400.

Figure 13: Number of completions at AQF qualification certificate III or above for women, regional and Aboriginal students¹

¹ Source: National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), National VET Provider Collection. Note: 2010 qualification numbers are preliminary due to lag in reporting. 2011 and 2012 data are not yet available.
Increase the proportion of young people with a bachelor degree or above to 44 per cent by 2025

In 2012, 38.2 per cent of people aged 25-34 years had attained a bachelor level qualification or above. This was an increase of 6.5 percentage points since 2006.

Increase the proportion of undergraduate enrolments by students from low socio-economic status backgrounds to 20 per cent by 2020

In 2011, 17.5 per cent of undergraduate enrolments in NSW were by students from low socio-economic status backgrounds. This was a slight increase on the rate for 2008 (16.7 per cent).

Figure 14: Proportion of 25-34 year olds in NSW holding a bachelor level qualification or above

Figure 15: Proportion of undergraduate students from low socio-economic status backgrounds enrolled at NSW higher education providers

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1 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Education and Work, Australia, (cat. No. 6227), additional data cubes.
Notes: Care needs to be taken with the interpretation of survey data as high standard errors can mean that differences from year to year are not significant. 2007 and 2008 figures not available.

2 Source: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), Selected Higher Education Statistics.
Increase the proportion of school leavers participating in further education, training or employment to 90 per cent by 2020

In 2011, an estimated 68.6 per cent of 15-19 year olds who had left school were participating in further education, training or employment. This was a decrease of 4.8 percentage points since 2010.

Figure 16: Proportion of 15-19 year old school leavers fully participating in education, training and/or employment


Notes: Care needs to be taken with the interpretation of survey data as high standard errors can mean that differences from year to year are not significant. 2012 data are not yet available.

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1 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Education and Work, Australia, (cat. No. 6227), additional data cubes.
Increase the number of apprenticeship and traineeship completions by 10 per cent by 2016

In 2011, 53,000 apprenticeships and traineeships were completed, an increase of 14,753 completions since 2006. In rural and regional NSW, 20,411 apprenticeships and traineeships were completed, compared to 16,096 in 2006 (an increase of 4,315 completions).

Figure 17: NSW apprenticeships and traineeships completion estimates (2006-2011)

Source: National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER), Apprenticeship and Traineeship Collection. Note: NCVER publishes updated estimates every quarter and historical data may change in new publications. 2012 data are not yet available.
We developed customised programs for students who required specialised support to undertake and complete VET qualifications. These included students with disability, Aboriginal students with special education requirements and remote students with limited access to training options. Our support included careers counselling, tutorial support and mentoring, access to specialised equipment and learning technologies and programs designed to improve employability and technical skills. Between 2008 and 2012, TAFE NSW increased enrolments for:

- Aboriginal students by 26.7 per cent from 29,135 to 36,901
- students from regional and remote areas by 18.8 per cent from 199,360 to 236,849
- students with disability by 23.1 per cent from 48,062 to 59,167
- students from language backgrounds other than English by 14.8 per cent from 111,930 to 128,456
- unemployed students by 41.3 per cent from 99,937 to 141,234
- students aged 15-24 years increased by 8.0 per cent, from 220,046 to 237,670.

Creating opportunities for people facing barriers

TAFE NSW is committed to enabling students from diverse backgrounds to reach their potential and maximise their employability.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute provided customised training to over 270 students experiencing disadvantage in partnership with Cana Communities. The training focused on foundation and employability skills and students had an employment rate of 90 per cent.

TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute developed the REAL Ed Program in partnership with Break Thru People Solutions and JobQuest to provide disadvantaged youth with literacy, numeracy and employability skills. The institute also developed the Skills for Tomorrow: Young Parents’ Program to help young parents complete school, gain work skills and employment while their children were cared for in an onsite crèche. Students completed an AQF Certificate II in Skills for Work and Training and a range of units relevant to the local labour market. The program involved local government and non-government services and won the inclusion category at the 2012 TAFE NSW Innovation and Excellence Showcase.

TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute partnered with Homecare Australia, Housing NSW and Community Services (NSW Department of Family and Community Services) to deliver customised programs to disadvantaged residents of the Campbelltown and Macquarie Fields area. The program resulted in 30 students securing employment with Homecare.

Adult and community education colleges continued to support disadvantaged learners with over 2,400 students enrolled in language, literacy and numeracy-supported VET programs, accounting for nearly 700,000 student contact hours. Colleges continued to deliver the Social Inclusion Program, which includes pre-vocational training opportunities for people facing barriers to employment and digital literacy programs for mature-aged people.

The NSW Adult Migrant English Service (AMES) delivers language, literacy and numeracy training programs, workplace training programs and related services and consultancies for newly arrived migrants, refugees, jobseekers and workplace clients. In July 2012, the NSW AMES became part of DEC International within the Department. NSW AMES partnered in the Departmental Adult Migrant English Program Consortia that deliver services in Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and regional and rural NSW.

Ensuring equal opportunities for people with disability

TAFE NSW aims to meet the needs of students with disability in vocational education, training and services and ensure that all students have equal access to the opportunities that skills training provide. In 2012, TAFE NSW had 59,167 enrolments by students with disability.

TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute ran an early intervention program in assistive technology, information technology and employability skills for 31 patients with spinal injuries from Royal North Shore Hospital, Prince of Wales Hospital and the Royal
Rehabilitation Centre Sydney spinal injury units. The program used social media, online and face-to-face delivery to assist outpatients. Half of the participants returned to further study or work. The institute also created the Youth Pathways Project: Orientation to TAFE for students with autism spectrum disorders who plan to enrol in vocational education and training. This program provided students and their families with a skills toolbox prior to enrolment and enabled a more successful transition from school.

TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute hosted the Using Inclusive Technologies in Education, Training and Employment Conference as part of National Skills Week to assist teachers, rehabilitation providers, employment providers, community service workers and people with disabilities learn about recent advances in inclusive technologies.

The NSW TradeAbility Pre-Apprenticeship Program for People with Disability assisted people who were not at school, but seeking to transition into an apprenticeship. In 2012, the program funded 11 courses and over 100 training places with participants expected to complete the program in early 2013. Of the 100 training places under the 2012 program, 87 were by students enrolled in TAFE NSW.

Improving business and career opportunities for Aboriginal people

TAFE NSW is committed to improving education and employment outcomes of Aboriginal students. TAFE NSW institutes developed customised programs for Aboriginal students to support participation in secondary and further education and to facilitate vocational outcomes and employment pathways. Partnerships with other education providers, enterprises and community groups ensure that students learn in real work environments. Between 2008 and 2012, TAFE NSW increased completions for:

- all Aboriginal students by 15.6 per cent from 9,903 to 11,449
- Aboriginal students aged 15-24 years in AQF certificate II and above qualifications by 90.1 per cent, from 967 to 1,838 completions.

We expanded the Indigenous Police Recruiting Our Way Delivery (IPROWD) program. IPROWD is a joint program between TAFE NSW, NSW Police, Charles Sturt University and the Commonwealth Government. It aims to help Aboriginal people gain entry to the NSW Police Academy at Goulburn, the first step to becoming an officer. The program is delivered by nine TAFE NSW institutes across the state and is managed by TAFE NSW - Western Institute.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute delivered the Indigenous Pre-Recruitment Course for Aboriginal candidates seeking to enlist in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Students were trained across the metropolitan area, enabling them to complete an AQF Certificate III in Employment and Training. As a result, students increased their chances of placement in the ADF and those who were not offered a place were provided with assistance to find alternative employment.

TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute delivered a customised course in civil construction to Aboriginal candidates seeking to enter the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Students were trained across the metropolitan area, enabling them to complete an AQF Certificate III in Employment and Training. As a result, students increased their chances of placement in the ADF and those who were not offered a place were provided with assistance to find alternative employment.

TAFE NSW - Western Institute partnered with schools in the region to deliver the Indigenous Sparkies Program, which was designed to kick-start a career in the electro-technology trade. The program included customised literacy and numeracy support, mentoring and work placement for students.

TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute partnered with Coles supermarkets to develop the Coles First Step program for Aboriginal job seekers. The program was customised to the training requirements of the company, students were provided with individualised support and mentoring and all graduating participants were offered employment.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute supported Aboriginal employees of the NSW Department of Family and Community Services to achieve the Vocational Graduate Certificate in Community Services Practice (Statutory Child Protection) and a AQF Diploma of Community Services (Case
Management). Through the Towards a Better Future Project, the institute provided recognition of prior learning, skills gap training and workplace mentoring. The project won a silver award in the Partnership category at the 2012 TAFE NSW Innovation and Excellence Awards.

The State Training Services Way Ahead for Aboriginal People program provided guidance, mentoring, counselling and support services to over 300 Aboriginal apprentices and trainees so they could complete their training and obtain their trade qualification. Under the New Careers for Aboriginal People program, our employment advisors helped over 1,200 job seekers across NSW. This resulted in around 450 Aboriginal job seekers gaining employment and a further 480 undertaking vocational skills training.

In 2012, State Training Services committed $1.29 million to provide customised training for Aboriginal people. This provided pre-vocational courses for 56 participants in an AQF Certificate II in Hospitality, 80 participants for a part qualification in the AQF Certificate II in Construction and 31 participants in AQF diploma-level qualifications in governance, community development and Aboriginal legal advocacy. State Training Services also developed and implemented a new program, the Regional Aboriginal Small Business Trades Pathway, to increase the number of Aboriginal small businesses in regional NSW. The program linked graduating Aboriginal tradespeople with local business advisors to provide guidance on how to set up their own small business. The program will target 250 graduating apprentices each year.

In 2012, our adult and community education Social Inclusion Program provided over 1,260 Aboriginal students with additional literacy and numeracy support to improve their employment prospects. Providers offered pathway planning, literacy and numeracy support, counselling and work experience to help students overcome their challenges and complete their training.

Removing barriers for women to non-traditional occupations

State Training Services initiated the first stage of the Women in Non-Traditional Trades Project, researching the trades where women were under-represented as apprentices. Stage two will implement communication strategies and support mechanisms to increase women’s participation in these industries. In 2012, 493 women completed apprenticeships in non-traditional trades. A further 2,283 women were undertaking apprenticeship training.

A special award for Women in a Non-traditional Trade or Occupation was included in the 2012 NSW Training Awards to recognise the achievements of women working in traditionally male-dominated trades. The winners, an aircraft maintenance engineer (graduate of TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute) and an electrician (graduate of TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute), will take on ambassadorial roles and help raise awareness and promote these trades as rewarding pathways for young women.

TAFE NSW developed the leadership skills of female teachers in TAFE NSW as part of a mentoring program to help women overcome educational barriers and forge greater pathways in non-traditional trade areas. TAFE NSW also worked with the NSW Department of Family and Community Services to address low enrolments and completions by women in non-traditional trades and to increase participation in the labour force and skill shortage areas in rural and regional areas of NSW.

Targeting training to the needs of rural and regional NSW

TAFE NSW provides a wide range of customised training for students in rural, regional and remote areas. TAFE NSW institutes work with industry, training providers and communities to target skills shortage and employment growth areas that meet the training needs of rural, regional and remote students and support the economic growth and sustainability of their local communities. Of the total 579,719 student enrolments in 2012, 240,671 were from regional institutes. Between 2008 and 2012, enrolments in diploma and above level qualifications at regional institutes increased by 72.3 per cent, from 8,623 to 14,861.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - Western Institute delivered over 3,200 student enrolments through Western Connect, a virtual college taking training to rural and remote communities by harnessing mobile teaching and simulator units.
TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute provided GreenSkills training to over 170 rural workers and contractors from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. By implementing best practice soil and water conservation techniques, the training ensured that the highest environmental standards are maintained when rehabilitating roads and tracks.

State Training Services delivered the Regional Training and Employment Strategy. This was developed to support economic growth in rural NSW and to close the training and employment gap between people in metropolitan and regional areas. It included a number of programs, including Partnering for Jobs. In 2012, this program allocated $225,000 to develop pathways into higher education for 32 people in health care, social assistance and professional, scientific and technical services industries in Orange, Dubbo and Eurobodalla. The program also provided training for around 320 people in regional NSW linked to local job opportunities.

In 2012, 12 Country Apprentice Scholarships were awarded to first year apprentices from regional NSW. These $10,000 per annum scholarships supported young people with financial and family hardships to undertake their training.

Retraining retrenched workers in regional and rural areas

One element of the Regional Training and Employment Strategy 2011 - 13 is targeted assistance to retrenched workers and those at risk of losing their jobs. In 2012, the program assisted over 1,430 retrenched or affected workers in 36 companies across NSW. Our efforts resulted in 560 retrenched workers in manufacturing, construction, retail, food processing and telecommunications undertaking retraining. At least 200 of these affected workers successfully secured employment.

State Training Services also administered the Continuing Apprentices Placement Service, which matched employers to retrenched apprentices and trainees wanting to continue their training in their chosen career. By the end of 2012, we had placed over 1,340 apprentices and trainees.

The NSW and the Commonwealth governments also partnered to establish a roaming fly-in fly-out (FIFO) coordinator, who will help match workers to where their skills are in demand.

TAFE NSW recognises that ongoing training for existing workers is vital for building the skills base of NSW and enabling employment mobility, particularly for workers without formal qualifications. For retrenched workers, this can include skills gap training, which assists in finding another job within industry sub sectors or other industry areas.

In 2012, TAFE NSW institutes delivered training to over 7,000 students under the Productivity Places Program. This included the delivery of training to over 2,700 existing workers and job seekers in regional NSW. TAFE NSW also delivered training to over 300 existing workers and job seekers through the National Workforce Development Fund, with 58 per cent of enrolments delivered through regional institutes.

TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute provided assessments of existing skills, identified local employment opportunities and targeted training to assist approximately 30 workers with employment in new trade areas. This program ran in partnership with the Men’s Shed at Katoomba and in the Hawkesbury district.

TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute provided training in business administration, forklift licensing, mechanical engineering, trade, hospitality and food safety to workers who were retrenched as a result of closures at South Grafton Abattoirs and Inghams Enterprises.

TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute provided training, in partnership with SunRice, to formerly retrenched and new workers at the re-opened rice mills at Deniliquin and Coleambally. The Deniliquin mill employed 75 trainees, with an additional 34 workers commencing induction training at the Coleambally mill. Skills upgrading in the AQF Certificate IV in Competitive Manufacturing was also provided for 25 existing worker trainees at Leeton.
Quality teaching and leadership

Recruiting and retaining the highest quality staff at TAFE NSW

TAFE NSW institutes implemented a range of strategies and initiatives to recruit and retain members of a professional and customer-focused workforce. TAFE NSW supports its teachers and other staff to upgrade their skills and transfer their expertise into their teaching, learning and work practices.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute supported new teachers through a mentoring program. This included advice on lesson planning and delivery, assessment and classroom management.

TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute conducted intensive pre-recruitment and induction consultations for new teaching and assessor staff. We also consulted with the Australian Human Rights Commission to explore options to support the employment and retention of mature aged workers.

We established 50 online communities of practice to build capability, share knowledge and encourage professional conversations. Over 3,500 VET practitioners accessed eCommunities in 2012. The eCommunities service includes templates, sample courses, resources, research and topics aligning with the educational technology priorities of TAFE NSW including learning design, assessment and mobile learning.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute conducted workshops for its teachers on generational learning styles and dealing with challenging behaviours and learning difficulties in the classroom. The institute also supported five staff to complete the Vocational Graduate Diploma in Education and Training for Sustainability in collaboration with Swinburne University. An additional 55 teachers completed a customised training program on sustainability. These units helped teachers to integrate sustainability principles and practices into their learning programs.

TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute provided professional development for 300 key personnel covering client engagement, educational leadership and management and carbon accounting.

Developing the skills and leadership capability of TAFE NSW staff

TAFE NSW continues to sponsor leadership and innovation through institute and state-wide policies and initiatives including online communities of practice, industry-specific professional development programs and mentoring and communities of practice.

In 2012, TAFE NSW delivered the innovative Building Our Future: Leadership Program for 21 senior staff to develop the next generation of leaders. The program was run through the Australian Catholic University and involved residential workshops and team-based project work culminating in presentations to the NSW TAFE Commission Board and the TAFE NSW executive.

We also delivered 40 TAFE Connects webinars to help practitioners use technology to design and deliver engaging learning experiences. Over 100 VET practitioners participated in each session. We continued to support our staff to adopt virtual learning environment tools and technologies. One hundred staff attended the Putting it Together workshop and a virtual showcase was held to share innovative practices.

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Improving the quality of VET training

State Training Services won a Commonwealth-funded Australian Apprenticeship Support (AAS) Services contract for 2012 to 2014. The state now has a one-stop-shop for employers and learners, linking to Commonwealth and state services.

During the year, we undertook the largest survey of NSW apprentices and employers ever undertaken in NSW. It provided a wealth of information to support ongoing apprenticeship reforms. The report on the survey A Fair Deal: Apprentices and their employers in NSW will help us increase apprenticeship and traineeship completions. State Training Services also developed a new learner and employer communication portal, strategies to increase industry participation in supervisor workshops and tools to help small to medium-sized employers select the best candidates.

For the first time, we required all 737 registered training organisations (RTOs) on the approved providers list to complete an internal review. The review confirmed that each RTO had the capability and capacity to deliver the necessary training services,
as well as promoting quality training and assessment services. This was supported by a series of professional development workshops. In 2012, 407 participants from 294 RTOs attended 19 workshops.

In 2012, all TAFE NSW institutes implemented professional development strategies for staff to meet national VET Quality Framework and Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) compliance requirements. Examples of other efforts to improve the quality of VET training from TAFE NSW institutes included the following:

- TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute conducted training for more than 200 head teachers and managers in new compliance requirements and to support quality improvement.
- TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute implemented a head teacher roadshow, a quality teaching and validation and mentor strategy and one-shop web-shop, My Workforce Development, to support the professional development of teachers and meet VET Quality Framework obligations.
- TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute implemented the ASQA Readiness Project to improve staff capability in consultation, assessment validation and quality teaching and learning strategies.
- TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute established an ASQA risk reduction plan and compliance teams to undertake gap analysis and inform professional development activities for teaching staff.
- TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute established the VET Quality Framework Peak Working Group to review RTO compliance issues, manage risks and implement strategies to ensure compliance with the components of the national quality framework.

Recognising excellence in teaching and training

In 2012, a number of TAFE NSW institutes, staff and students were recognised for excellence in industry, state and national awards. For example, at the Australian Training Awards:

- TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute won the International Training Provider of the Year
- TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute won the National Focus category in the Skills for Sustainability Award
- a TAFE NSW - New England Institute student was the runner-up in the individual category in the Australian School-based Apprentice of the Year Award.

Ten teachers from TAFE NSW institutes were recognised at the Minister for Education’s inaugural Quality Teaching Awards.

TAFE NSW also exhibited outstanding projects at the 2012 TAFE NSW Innovation and Excellence Showcase. More than 1,000 visitors came to see a range of projects designed to improve skills development and employment outcomes. TAFE NSW - Western Institute won the overall award for TAFE Western Connect, a virtual college that takes our training to rural and remote communities.
Reforming vocational education and training

*Smart and Skilled* was announced by the Minister for Education in October 2012. These major reforms to the NSW vocational education and training system will introduce a student entitlement for qualifications up to certificate III and student loans for AQF diploma and advanced diploma qualifications in 2014.

We are developing a skills list in consultation with industry to define what courses will be subsidised. Students will be able to select courses from the skills list knowing that these courses have good job prospects.

Partnering with industry to meet local skills needs

In 2012, the *Productivity Places Program* supported the delivery of full qualifications for 1,920 jobseekers and 10,810 existing workers at a cost of $40.4 million. The program funded job seekers to boost their qualifications from AQF certificate II and III to the higher AQF certificate IV and diploma levels. We also helped existing workers upgrade from AQF certificate III to advanced diploma level. In 2012, TAFE NSW delivered training to over 7,000 job seekers and existing workers as part of the *Productivity Places Program*.

State Training Services worked closely with NSW Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) to develop industry profiles and identify priorities for funding under the *Strategic Skills Program*. Through the program, 13,500 people undertook training to address existing and emerging skill needs. We also worked to encourage training organisations to customise their programs to better meet the needs of individuals and employers. Our *Partnering for Jobs Program* provided funding for over 310 jobseekers to undertake training to meet the needs of local employers and help participants secure employment.

State Training Services regional offices continued to work with local businesses on mentoring and support services for apprentices and trainees and broker training solutions to address skill shortages. Companies we assisted this year included Fujitsu, Leighton Construction, Agrifoods, Amcor Paper Mill, Freedom Foods, Valma Support Services and Warburn Estate Winery.

Under the 2011/12 *Group Training Organisation Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program*, the NSW Government partnered with registered trainers to deliver pre-apprenticeship training in priority trades. The program had 1,069 commencements and more than a quarter of these participants went on to secure an apprenticeship.

The *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Training Program* provided over $72 million to train over 91,000 apprentices and trainees in 2012. The building, construction and automotive industries engaged the greatest number of apprentices, while the majority of trainees went to the finance, insurance, business services, community services and health industries.

TAFE NSW institutes continued to consult with state and local stakeholders via Industry skills councils, industry training advisory boards, the NSW Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services, industry associations, local businesses and communities. Independent research provided us with a strong evidence base to assess demands in industry areas and specific occupations. Through analysis and consultation, TAFE NSW institutes continued to anticipate industry demand and prevent skills shortages before they occur.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute collaborated with government and construction industry representatives to give 40 Kempsey Bypass Alliance employees the opportunity to gain an AQF certificate III qualification from the Resources and Infrastructure Industry Training Package.

TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute collaborated with Macquarie Generation, owner and operator of Liddell and Bayswater power stations in the upper Hunter region, to secure national workforce development funding. The institute identified the workforce development needs of the business, facilitated links with industry advisory bodies and delivered customised training to meet these requirements. The institute also delivered a program for apprentices to attend the Muswellbrook Mining Skills Centre for eight months of their apprenticeship, providing them with experience in plant mechanics and workplace safety before commencing at the local mine. In 2012, the centre received the NSW Minerals Council’s Environment and Community Excellence Award.
TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute delivered courses in partnership with the Master Builders Association for trainees in the civil infrastructure industry.

Using digital media and technology to deliver flexible, personalised learning options

TAFE NSW customises and personalises services in vocational and tertiary education and training to give learners a wider variety of courses, alternative delivery methods and access to cutting-edge technologies.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute completed construction of the AutoCel, a purpose-built transport technology centre. AutoCel contains state-of-the-art online simulation training equipment, allowing students to study on-site or remotely. The facility will significantly enhance our ability to respond to rapidly shifting transport industry needs and deliver innovative training in light automotive, spare parts, marine, motorcycle and outdoor power equipment.

TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute hosted the Adobe Connect Pro web conferencing platform, which enabled students and teachers to access the latest in web conferencing technology. Over 6,000 users hosted conferences in more than 1,300 meeting rooms. The institute also implemented the Mix+Match Strategy to increase the range of learning options available to students and industry. The institute and the Open Training Education Network (OTEN) used social media to engage with and deliver training to students.

TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute implemented 37 courses enhanced by Moodle, video-conferencing and social media. These covered a range of courses including online courses in fitness and shopfitting.

Reforming apprenticeships and traineeships

In 2012, State Training Services worked with 45 industry sectors to shorten apprenticeships and traineeships by ensuring competency-based progression, advanced entry provisions and reduced nominal terms were in place. As a result, 37 per cent of apprentices and trainees completed their training at least six months early.

Competency-based progression arrangements are now available in the meat processing, furnishing, seafood, automotive repair, automotive manufacture, printing and graphic arts industries. The nominal terms of apprenticeships in beauty therapy, hairdressing, commercial cookery, civil construction, carpentry, joinery, stonemasonry and marine engineering have been reduced from four to three years.

A number of recommendations from the Board of Vocational Education and Training report A Fair Deal: Apprentices and their employers in NSW were implemented through the State Training Services Completions Project. One of the key recommendations was for registered training organisations to be able to advise of apprenticeship or traineeship completions as soon as competency has been achieved.

Collaborating with the Commonwealth, states and territories to harmonise and streamline services

The NSW Government signed the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform in April 2012. This will improve choice for students and support initiatives to increase access to industry relevant qualifications. It will help us work towards a more interconnected training sector that cuts across school, vocational, higher education and employment services and better service the needs of industry.

State Training Services signed a memorandum of understanding with the national VET regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and contributed to an information sharing model for the VET sector under the national partnership. This will enable us to better share information with other jurisdictions improving efficiency, reducing duplication of effort and helping training providers better respond to emerging skills needs.
As the leading provider of vocational education and training in Australia, TAFE NSW works with Commonwealth and state government agencies, industry and community peak bodies to improve the skills and qualification levels of the NSW workforce and grow the NSW economy. In 2012, TAFE NSW:

- provided strategic advice to the NSW Smart and Skilled initiative on pricing, accounting for geographical remoteness and disadvantage
- made submissions to the Australian Workforce Productivity Agency’s Future Focus: Australia’s Skills and Workforce Development Needs, recommending a more seamless tertiary education and training sector
- provided strategic advice on the Australian Quality Training Framework to restore public confidence in VET and improve the quality of training
- provided input to the Commonwealth Government’s extension of the VET FEE-HELP Scheme to subsidise students studying diploma level and above qualifications.

Building an effective and coordinated tertiary education system

We have set ourselves a number of ambitious targets for levels of participation and attainment in VET and higher education. One of the key steps to achieving these targets was the NSW Government’s Review of Tertiary Pathways, chaired by the Parliamentary Secretary for Tertiary Education and Skills. The review committee consulted with tertiary education experts, public and private educational institutions and representatives from business, industry and the community.

The committee’s report was released in August 2012 and made a number of recommendations to improve tertiary education opportunities for NSW students, especially those from rural communities and disadvantaged backgrounds. It identified the importance of creating a more connected, efficient and effective tertiary sector that is accessible to all students. The report set out seven areas for reform:

- enhanced transparency and better evidence-based decisions
- higher aspirations and expectations
- improved educational attainment and preparation for tertiary study
- equitable financial support
- expanded opportunities for rural and regional students
- better communication and information for students and parents
- incentives for innovation.

We continue to work through the implementation of the review’s recommendations.

In 2012, there were over 63,130 students enrolled in vocational education courses in NSW schools. More than half of these students obtained a statement of attainment and 10,120 students obtained a recognised qualification, which allowed them to gain industry-related skills and build pathways to vocational education and training. We have established partnerships with specialist industries allowing school students in rural and remote locations to interact with industry experts on projects integrated into their school studies. Students connected via video-conference to mentors in Rio Tinto, V8 Supercars Australia and the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

The development and delivery of integrated VET and higher education courses is an important way to increase levels of tertiary attainment across NSW. We are moving towards integrated qualifications that are jointly developed and delivered by VET, higher education and industry partners. This allows students to build applied skills, academic literacy, conceptual understanding and critical analysis skills as they progress towards a practical qualification.

TAFE NSW continues to develop higher education qualifications in areas of skills demand. Universities and industry groups contribute through our course advisory committees, the TAFE NSW Governing Council and the TAFE Academic Board. TAFE NSW negotiations with 21 universities and other training organisations have resulted in 1,146 agreements to create student pathways to higher education. In 2012, we offered degrees in:

- Bachelor of Design (Interior Design)
- Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and Care (Birth-5)
- Bachelor of Applied Finance (Financial Planning)
Bachelor of Information Technology (Network Security)
Bachelor of 3D Art and Animation
Associate Degree of Accounting.

TAFE NSW higher education courses include an internship and offer advanced standing to students who have completed related VET training programs. Fifteen TAFE NSW campuses are now accredited for higher education delivery, including six regional campuses. In 2012, TAFE NSW institutes had 393 enrolments, including 19 international participants in higher education programs and graduated its first students in the Bachelor of Design (Interior Design). TAFE NSW also negotiated 124 credit transfer agreements with universities for AQF diploma and advanced diploma qualifications in a diversity of fields including community services, nursing, laboratory technology, beauty therapy, design, retail and hospitality.

In 2012, TAFE NSW - New England Institute partnered with the University of New England to share delivery of the Bachelor of Health Practice and Bachelor of Community Services. The program was funded by the Structural Adjustment Fund and provided multiple entry and exit options for prospective students in the community and health sectors.

TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute negotiated with Southern Cross University for associate degrees in business and health to be offered through their newly established Southern Cross University College, providing additional pathways for rural students into university.

TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute provided a tertiary preparation certificate program in partnership with Charles Sturt University. This helped Year 12 graduates with insufficient Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) scores gain entry into their degree of choice.

Three TAFE NSW institutes (Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney) negotiated a joint partnership with the University of Ballarat to offer a Bachelor of Applied Management. Students completing an advanced diploma receive up to two years credit towards the degree program.

TAFE NSW - Western Institute partnered with Charles Sturt University to develop an online early childhood associate degree program that helped students transition to university.
Performance report:
In our communities
We will build on the state’s tremendous community spirit by promoting strong social partnerships.

Our performance targets

- Increase the proportion of the NSW population involved in volunteering
- Increase the proportion of the NSW population involved in local community organisations
- Increase the proportion of the population who have weekly social contact with family or friends
- Increase the proportion of the population who feel they have someone to turn to in times of crisis
- Ten per cent increase in participation in sport and recreational activities by 2016
- Increase the number of opportunities for cultural participation
- Increase the number of partnerships between Aboriginal communities and the NSW Government
- Increase access for people to learn Aboriginal languages
- Close the life expectancy gap within a generation

Our priorities

High expectations, closing the gaps
- Increasing opportunities for Aboriginal people to participate in sporting and cultural activities and events
- Increasing access to Aboriginal languages
- Enhancing sporting and recreation opportunities for people with a disability

Stronger communities and leadership
- Making volunteering easier and more rewarding
- Promoting leadership in sport
- Strengthening youth leadership
- Leading community remembrance and honouring the sacrifices of the past

Better ways of doing business
- Charting a new direction in Aboriginal affairs
- Improving our sporting facilities
Our performance targets

Increase the proportion of the NSW population involved in volunteering

Figure 18: Percentage of people aged 18 and over who undertook voluntary work for an organisation in the last 12 months¹

Research shows that people who volunteer have better wellbeing, health and live longer than people who do not. Volunteering also supports and extends government-funded services and delivers care and support to the needy in local communities. Our target is to exceed the national average by 2016. Between 2006 and 2010, the estimated proportion of adults involved in formal volunteering in NSW rose by around 12 per cent to 36.6 per cent, exceeding the national average of 36.3 per cent.

¹ Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, General Social Survey, 2006 (cat. no. 4159155001); General Social Survey: Summary Results, 2006 (cat. no. 159.0.2006); Voluntary Work, Australia 2010, (cat. no. 41590DD007, 201). Notes: Surveys are based on a sample of the population rather than the whole population. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings. Survey results are available every four years.

Increase the proportion of the NSW population involved in local community organisations

Figure 19: Percentage of people aged 18 and over who were involved with a community support organisation in the last 12 months²

Our target is to exceed the national average by 2016. Between 2006 and 2010, the estimated proportion of adults involved in a community support organisation in NSW remained stable at around 33.3 per cent of the population. Over the same period, there was a small increase in the national average to 34.9 per cent.

² Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics General Social Survey, 2006 (cat no.: 4159155001); General Social Survey, 2006 (cat no. 4159.0.2006); General Social Survey (2010), expanded CURF, RADL; General Social Survey (cat. no. 41590DD006, 2010). Notes: Surveys are based on a sample of the population rather than the whole population. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings. Survey results are available every four years.
Increase the proportion of the population who have weekly social contact with family or friends

Close personal networks of families and friends provide a source of practical help, material and emotional support. Our target is to exceed the national average by 2016. While the proportion of adults with regular contact with family and friends remains high (at around 96.1 per cent of the population), between 2006 and 2010 there was no significant change. This is roughly consistent with the national average.

Figure 20: Percentage of people aged 18 and over who had contact with family and friends living outside the household in the last week

Close personal networks of families and friends provide a source of practical help, material and emotional support. Our target is to exceed the national average by 2016. While the proportion of adults with regular contact with family and friends remains high (at around 96.1 per cent of the population), between 2006 and 2010 there was no significant change. This is roughly consistent with the national average.

Figure 20: Percentage of people aged 18 and over who had contact with family and friends living outside the household in the last week

Increase the proportion of the population who feel they have someone to turn to in times of crisis

Levels of social attachment can also be measured by the ability of people to get support in an emergency. Our target is to exceed the national average by 2016. In 2010, an estimated 92.6 per cent of adults reported that in a time of crisis, they could get support from outside their household. This proportion has been stable over the period from 2006 to 2010 and consistent with the national average.

Figure 21: Percentage of people aged 18 and over who were able to get support in a time of crisis

Levels of social attachment can also be measured by the ability of people to get support in an emergency. Our target is to exceed the national average by 2016. In 2010, an estimated 92.6 per cent of adults reported that in a time of crisis, they could get support from outside their household. This proportion has been stable over the period from 2006 to 2010 and consistent with the national average.

1 Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Social Trends: Data Cube, Family and Community, 1998-2011 (cat. no. 4102.0); General Social Survey (2010), expanded CURF, RADL. Notes: Surveys are based on a sample of the population rather than the whole population. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings. Survey results are available every four years.

2 Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, General Social Survey, NSW, 2006 (cat. no. 4159155001); General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2006 (cat. no. 4159.0.2006); General Social Survey, Australia, 2010 (cat. no. 41590D0006_2010); General Social Survey 2010, expanded CURF, RADL. Notes: Surveys are based on a sample of the population rather than the whole population. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings. Survey results are available every four years.
Ten per cent increase in participation in sport and recreational activities by 2016

Sport is important to the Australian sense of identity and is a major vehicle for people to connect with their local communities and institutions. Over 3.8 million people in NSW participated regularly in sport or physical activity in 2011/12. The participation rate for people aged 15 and over increased to 65.1 per cent in 2011/12, compared to 62.8 per cent in 2009/10. This puts us on par with the national average (65.0 per cent) and on track to achieve this ambitious target.

Increase the number of opportunities for cultural participation

We supported a range of multicultural and local community events aimed at building connections across the state’s diverse communities, particularly through our grants programs. These events helped stimulate local businesses and provided economic development opportunities for communities. Further information about multicultural, Aboriginal and other locally-planned events is detailed in the following sections.

Figure 22: Percentage of people aged 15 years and over who regularly participate in physical activity

1 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2011-12, (cat no. 4177.0). Notes: Regular participation refers to playing activity at least three times per week on average and excludes non-playing activity such as coaching, refereeing and activity that is related to work or household chores. Surveys are based on a sample of the population rather than the whole population. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the findings. Participation in sport and recreational activities has previously been measured through the Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS). The ERASS ceased in 2010 and has been replaced with a biennial ABS Multi-Purpose Household Survey collection.
Increase the number of partnerships between Aboriginal communities and the NSW Government

The Partnership Community Program has increased the governance capacity of communities and strengthened local decision-making by linking to existing Aboriginal community governance and representative arrangements. By June 2012, 23 of the state’s 40 partnership communities had a recognised community engagement group established.

In 2012, the NSW Government commenced a review of its approach to recognised community governance and local decision-making. The NSW Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs worked in partnership with Aboriginal communities, the Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations and other peak bodies to make recommendations on improved governance and local decision-making models for incorporation in the NSW Government’s new Aboriginal affairs strategy.

Increase access for people to learn Aboriginal languages

All Aboriginal languages in NSW are classified as critically endangered. Although the loss of language does not disqualify Aboriginal people from culture, identity or spiritual connections, restoration of language does enable a profound revitalisation of these relationships. In 2012, there were 1,244 Aboriginal students in NSW public schools taking part in classes under the Aboriginal Languages in Schools Program. Between 2011 and 2012, TAFE NSW enrolments in Aboriginal language qualifications increased by 55.4 per cent from 175 to 272.

**Figure 23: Partnership Communities with a recognised Community Engagement Group**

![Figure 23](image1)

1 Sources: NSW Aboriginal Land Council; Aboriginal Affairs. Note: There are 40 partnerships in NSW recognised under the Partnership Community Program.

**Figure 24: Aboriginal students participating in an Aboriginal language program in a public school or in a TAFE NSW qualification**

![Figure 24](image2)

2 Sources: Aboriginal education and training directorate, Aboriginal Languages in Schools Program administrative records; Department of Education and Communities, School enrolments data; TAFE NSW student enrolment collection. Notes: The data provided on students attending public schools refers to the number of Aboriginal students identified in evaluation reports by schools that received funding under the Aboriginal Language Program in that year. This information is provided at the end of each school year. TAFE NSW enrolments refer to students enrolled in TAFE NSW developed and accredited Aboriginal language courses including AQF Certificate I in Aboriginal Language/s, Certificate II in Aboriginal Language/s and Certificate III in Aboriginal Language/s. These courses are designed for Aboriginal people with entry for non-Aboriginal people subject to the approval of the local Aboriginal community.
Close the life expectancy gap within a generation

Estimates of life expectancy are a measure of population health and disadvantage. For the 2005 to 2007 period, life expectancy at birth was estimated to be 69.9 years for Aboriginal men and 75.0 years for women. Compared with other Australian states and territories, NSW has the highest life expectancy at birth. However, it remains unacceptable that the difference in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is 8.8 years for men and 7.5 years for women.

![Life expectancy at birth by Indigenous status and sex](image_url)

Figure 25: Life expectancy at birth by Indigenous status and sex

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1 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Experimental Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2005–2007 (cat. no. 3302.0.55.003). Notes: The ABS recommends that care is taken in interpreting the findings because of the inherent uncertainties in the data. Life expectancy refers to the average number of additional years a person of a given age and sex might expect to live, if they experienced the age/sex specific death rates for 2005-2007 continued throughout their life. The experimental life tables are calculated for a three-year period and reported every five years.
High expectations, closing the gaps

Increasing opportunities for Aboriginal people to participate in sporting and cultural activities and events

In 2012, Sport and Recreation delivered a range of activities and programs specifically for Aboriginal communities. Our day programs included 237 Aboriginal sports days, involving over 32,500 participants. As an example, we coordinated the Koori Netball Tournament in Newcastle in partnership with the Charlestown Netball Association, which involved 57 Aboriginal junior, mixed and women’s teams.

We supported the Yabun festival, the largest one-day Aboriginal event in Australia. The festival attracted over 20,000 people in 2012, showcasing Aboriginal culture and talent, increasing community awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and history and advancing reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

We also supported NAIDOC week activities in July, Taree’s Saltwater Freshwater Festival on Australia Day and the Aboriginal Cultural Showcase, a program of Aboriginal music and culture during the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

Increasing access to Aboriginal languages

The NSW Government allocated $500,000 to support Aboriginal languages through the Centre for Aboriginal Language Coordination and Development (CALCD), hosted by the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. An independent board was established to operate the centre and eight Aboriginal members were appointed to represent language groups across NSW. In 2012, the board consulted with communities to identify priorities and allocate around $200,000 for language projects. The CALCD will report on outcomes in 2013.

In 2012, we provided funding to 30 schools to employ tutors to teach 11 Aboriginal languages to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. We also continued to collaborate with the Koori Centre at the University of Sydney to sponsor eligible Aboriginal teachers in schools and TAFE NSW institutes to participate in the Master of Indigenous Languages Education program.

The Connecting to Country initiative is a quality teaching and leadership program that focuses on developing the willingness and ability of our school staff to establish relationships with Aboriginal students. It is facilitated by the local or regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and the Department’s Aboriginal education and training directorate, in conjunction with regional Aboriginal education teams and members of the Aboriginal Studies Association. This five-day professional development program consists of a three-day cultural immersion program developed by the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group where participants learn about the cultural, linguistic and family backgrounds of their students. This is followed by a two-day workshop where participants translate what they learn into quality school leadership strategies and quality teaching processes. In total, 364 teachers and 94 principals have participated in Connecting to Country to date, including 276 teachers and 66 principals in 2012.

TAFE NSW continued to offer AQF certificate I to III qualifications according to local Aboriginal language requirements. These courses are developed and delivered in collaboration with local Aboriginal community groups and Aboriginal language speakers. Examples include the following:

- TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute delivered the Aboriginal Languages Resource Development Program in the upper Hunter region. This program provided the community with the opportunity to revitalise the local Wonnarua language by developing audio and video material.
- TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute delivered the AQF Certificate I in Aboriginal languages (Dhurga) in partnership with communities at Moruya and Nowra. Two students have since pursued higher education and two staff have enrolled in a Master of Indigenous Languages.
- TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute launched an Aboriginal Languages Strategy 2012-14, the Gathang language web portal on the international FirstVoices website and the Yaygirr Aboriginal language dictionary to help keep these languages alive.
- TAFE NSW - New England Institute developed an introductory course and Certificate I in Aboriginal Languages to increase access to the Gamilaraay language.
Enhancing sporting and recreation opportunities for people with a disability

In 2012, Sport and Recreation delivered a range of activities and programs for people with disability. Our day programs included 67 programs for around 2,180 participants.

We helped fund community organisations to run sporting and recreation activities. In 2012, we provided $230,000 to 18 state sports organisations and $104,400 for 16 local projects to help people with disability participate in sport. This year, we also signed a memorandum of understanding with the NSW Department of Family and Community Services to provide $1.08 million over three years for respite camps and $250,000 over two years to increase participation of people with disability in mainstream sport and recreation and improve access to facilities across NSW.

In October 2012, we partnered with the Royal Rehabilitation Centre to hold the second Return 2 Sport Expo at Sydney Olympic Park. The two-day event, which involved 50 state sporting organisations, 200 school students and 500 people with disability, helped raise awareness and improve opportunities for people to engage in healthy sport and recreational activities. Against the backdrop of the London 2012 Paralympic Games, the expo showcased exhibitions and demonstrations of soccer, table tennis, golf, sailing and other sports and activities.

Camp Willing and Able at Lake Ainsworth Sport and Recreation Centre is a residential program for people with physical or intellectual disability. In 2012, 67 participants, including 38 children, took part in four overnight camps throughout the year.

Our Sports Ability courses helped sporting organisations understand how to include people with disability in a structured, safe and fun sporting environment and provided opportunities for people with and without disabilities to participate together.
Stronger communities and leadership

Making volunteering easier and more rewarding

In May 2012, the Minister for Citizenship and Communities launched the first NSW Volunteering Strategy. The strategy focuses on:

- making it easier to volunteer
- broadening the volunteer base
- volunteering as a pathway to employment
- improving recognition and support for workplace volunteering
- valuing volunteers and celebrating their contributions.

We launched a new website in May 2012 and had attracted around 25,000 visitors by the end of the year. The site provides a single point of access and resources for volunteers, organisations and business. To support the new strategy, we also:

- consulted the community on recognising the rights of volunteers, with more than 3,000 people providing feedback
- reduced the price of police checks for volunteers in aged care
- provided training for 50 volunteer managers
- convened our first corporate volunteering forum with 40 participants from leading companies and major non-government organisations
- developed a resource to help small and medium-sized organisations manage their risks
- created new pathways to Community Justice Centres for resolving disputes involving volunteers.

We started a trial of timebanking in the Central Coast, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Hunter regions. Timebanking provides a way for members to exchange services online. It allows members to earn credits when donating their time and then spend these credits to receive services from another volunteer. A total of $300,000 in funding was provided, aiming to increase the number of volunteers in the region. We have begun an evaluation of the trial in partnership with the University of Newcastle and the University of Wollongong.

We also began a trial of volunteering as a pathway to employment in food production under the Bathurst Grows project. Under the project, 25 volunteers developed their skills in food production and service industries and successfully secured employment. In 2013, we are hoping to expand this project to other regions.

We have also secured access for 100 volunteers to train in the AQF Certificate IV in Volunteer Program Coordination in 2013, helping participants find employment as volunteer managers.

We provided $30,000 to support the 2012 Volunteer of the Year Awards and the regional program in 19 locations across NSW. More than 350 nominations were received in seven categories including Volunteer of the Year, Corporate Volunteer of the Year and Not-for-Profit Volunteer Manager.

Promoting leadership in sport

In 2012, we sponsored a number of events and courses aimed at improving leadership, networking and development opportunities to people involved in the sport and recreation industry.

Over 70 directors from state sporting organisations attended courses delivered by the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Courses were tailored to the needs of the industry and included a three-day program for 26 state-level board directors from large sporting organisations, a three-day program for 23 aspiring female directors and a one-day program for not-for-profit directors from small and medium-sized sports organisations.

We supported women in leadership positions by inviting over 80 industry CEOs and board members to attend the Sport Leaders Breakfast: Value of Women on Boards. Ita Buttrose AO, OBE delivered the keynote address encouraging leaders to identify aspiring female directors and opportunities for them to move into leadership positions.

Around 600 coaches and officials received training through our coaching and officiating program. Our program includes face-to-face and distance training options, with courses covering basic coaching principles for beginners, intermediate practical coaching skills, through to advanced training of officials. We held a number of breakfast sessions for coaching and officiating...
directors as an opportunity to discuss current and emerging issues and share examples of good practice.

We held over 240 sport development courses in metropolitan and regional areas to assist sport volunteers deliver services to the community and learn important skills in sports administration, marketing, sponsorship, fundraising, volunteer management, child protection member protection and sports safety. The courses were attended by over 2,300 administrators.

Our sport rage prevention kit and Coloured Vest Program continued to be popular with sports administrators in 2012, with 16 different sporting organisations ordering 530 kits and 113 coloured vest kits to help protect beginner officials from abuse.

We also worked with sporting groups on the Tackling Violence initiative to address issues of domestic violence. In partnership with NSW rugby league clubs and players, we produced a series of local community service announcements broadcast on regional television during rugby league programming. We also helped to make them available on the websites of participating clubs. During the 2012 season, over 1,000 players participated in the program.

**Strengthening youth leadership**

We deliver a number of programs and grant schemes aimed at increasing opportunities for young people to participate in public decision-making.

Youth Opportunities was launched by the Minister for Citizenship and Communities in 2012. This $3.1 million initiative is aimed at removing barriers to young people’s participation in the community. Over 250 applications were received between June and August 2012. Grants of up to $50,000 per year were provided to 33 new youth-led and youth-managed local community projects across NSW.

We also supported Youth Week 2012: Imagine, create, inspire in April 2012. Youth Week involved over 3,000 young people in planning, organising and running events and activities and celebrating youth achievements. We provided around $245,000 in grants to local councils to support the events. During the week, more than 850 local activities took place with an estimated 82,000 people participating.

We also supported the Youth Advisory Council which met five times in 2012. During Youth Week, the council hosted a forum with WorkCover. Almost 100 young people were involved in a discussion on the high incidence of workplace injury among young workers and strategies to address the issue. In August, the Council consulted with more than 120 young people in Dubbo, Wellington, Narromine, Peak Hill, Gilgandra and Dunedoo about how they see themselves and how they contribute and connect with their communities.

**Leading community remembrance and honouring the sacrifices of the past**

In April 2012, the Minister for Citizenship and Communities announced that General Peter Cosgrove AC, MC (Ret’d) will lead the preparations for the state’s commemorations of the centenary of the First World War in 2014-2018. The Centenary of Anzac Advisory Council will steer a broad program of state and local initiatives to pay respects to Australian service men and women. In June, 25 community leaders, including Victoria Cross recipient Corporal Mark Donaldson and Gallipoli actor Mark Lee, were appointed as ambassadors to serve on the advisory council.

NSW Veterans’ Affairs has worked in partnership with ex-service organisations to ensure that remembrance and commemorative events were sustained, the state’s war memorials were maintained and the sacrifices of service men and women are understood by future generations through school and youth initiatives. Examples included:

- the Anzac Community Grants Program, which started in November 2011 to increase the participation of young people and multicultural communities in the Anzac centenary
- twenty memorial scholarships for school students to represent NSW in visits to Korea, Singapore, Vietnam and sites on the Western Front
- the dedication of an addition to the memorial in Cowra, undertaken by the local branch of the Returned and Services League (RSL) with a $3,500 Community War Memorials Grant
- a display of one of the midget submarines involved in the 1942 attack on Sydney Harbour at Sydney’s Anzac Memorial in May 2012.
New and better ways of doing business

Charting a new direction in Aboriginal affairs

In August 2011, the Premier and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs announced the establishment of the Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs to respond to the Auditor-General’s performance audit of Two Ways Together: NSW Aboriginal Affairs Plan 2003-2012.

The taskforce was asked to recommend concrete reforms to improve education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people and to improve service delivery and accountability. In November 2012, the taskforce made 10 recommendations to the NSW Government, aimed at strengthening:

- the role of Aboriginal people in local decision-making
- support for Aboriginal culture and language
- Aboriginal economic participation, encompassing education and employment outcomes
- mutual accountability for delivering services and achieving outcomes.

Aboriginal Affairs supported the taskforce in its deliberations and assisted with the consultation process, which involved over 2,700 people attending community consultation forums, over 400 people completing surveys and 207 written submissions by individuals and organisations. Aboriginal Affairs worked with the taskforce to report on the consultation findings and emerging themes. Aboriginal Affairs also drafted a new strategy for the government’s consideration and began planning for its implementation, evaluation and reporting.

Improving our sporting facilities

Sporting infrastructure, particularly the large stadiums that host national and international events, are an important contributor to the state’s economy. They allow us to compete with other states and countries by attracting events to NSW and securing the social and economic benefits that flow from them.

The Minister for Sport and Recreation released the NSW Stadia Strategy in November 2012. This strategy was developed following extensive consultation with sporting groups and event promoters. It will guide our future investment in facilities for the benefit of participants and spectators, cater for multipurpose usage and improve our competitive position when bidding for events.

We worked with a number of local communities to progress the government’s commitment of $47 million in grants towards community infrastructure. For example, $2.2 million was allocated to APIA Leichhardt Tigers Football Club for Lambert Park upgrades and $1.8 million was provided for the Pluim Park upgrade on the Central Coast, with a further $1.8 committed in 2012/13.