The Office of Education is the Department’s primary source of strategic analysis and advice on cross-sectoral, state wide and national developments across the full spectrum of education and training from the earliest years to post-school training and higher education. The Office has day-to-day responsibility for Commonwealth-State issues, encompassing policy on early childhood, schools, skills and higher education, and for cross-sectoral matters, notably non-government schooling policy. The Office is also responsible for funding and regulating providers of early childhood education and care and for the management of contestable VET funds. The planning role of the Office encompasses corporate planning and reporting and whole-of-government coordination under the State Plan.

In 2011, a priority for the Office was the strategic pursuit of security and continuity of Commonwealth funding for education and training in NSW across schools, vocational education and training and early childhood. Central to these efforts was the work of the Office in shaping the direction of the national Gonski review of school funding. Parallel to this was intensive policy work on negotiating future funding and policy directions relating to National Partnerships and other bilateral and multilateral funding agreements, and negotiating implementation of Federal 2010 Election Commitments for schooling to support the State Government’s objectives. In closely allied policy work, the Office of Education led the development of proposals for skills reform in NSW.

Early childhood education became a key priority when the Office of Education was tasked with integrating the sector into the education portfolio after the March 2011 General Election. In 2011, the Office focussed on coordinating a public review of NSW funding arrangements for early childhood education, preparing for the commencement of new national regulatory arrangements for the sector from 1 January 2012 and ensuring the smooth integration of early childhood functions into the operations of the Department.

In its role in providing and advising on high-quality performance data, the Office of Education produced a large quantity of statistical analysis that fed directly into policy decisions. Notable contributions included work done on rural and regional disadvantage and on the economic background to skills reform.

The key achievements of the Office of Education for 2011 included:

- providing a major new analysis of school education and disadvantage for the Australian Government’s Review of Funding for Schooling, chaired by Mr David Gonski
- delivering an interim and a final NSW Government submission to the Gonski Review, both of which were favourably cited by that Review, other States and Territories, other education stakeholders, the Commonwealth and academic researchers
- participating in the MCEEDYA process for reviewing school funding and regulation, including providing a detailed analysis of national school data in collaboration with The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)
- leading consultation and research on skills reform through the release of a public discussion paper, the conduct of 14 public forums state wide, the analysis of 105 written submissions and the commissioning of strategic economic modelling
- preparing and coordinating NSW submissions to 2 major Commonwealth higher education sector reviews in 2011: the Review of Higher Education Base Funding and the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- providing quality policy support for negotiations around the review of the revised National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development and the National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform
- supporting the State’s national leadership in rural and regional education by placing this issue on the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEE) workplan and making it the focus of a related Ministerial forum in 2011
- producing an in-depth strategic analysis of rural and regional education, presenting new evidence showing that the gap between regional and metropolitan educational outcomes in Australia is persistent and widening
- providing national leadership in the collaborative development of Australia wide principal standards (with the NSW Institute of Teachers)
managing accountabilities to the Commonwealth for existing National Partnerships including the securing of more than $190 million in 2011 in facilitation and reward funding to continue implementation of the 3 Smarter Schools National Partnerships, which have a total budget of $1.5 billion

working with school and university sectors to increase student transition to higher education through the alignment of Commonwealth initiatives to State priorities for low-SES students and other targeted groups, and facilitating the use of student data to inform school and university planning

leading development of the Universities Governing Bodies Act, which allows greater flexibility in the size and composition of university governing councils

leading the coordinated departmental briefing of the incoming Minister following the March 2011 general election

managing a project to develop 3 innovative degree courses combining VET content and university study that will provide students with seamless transitions between the VET and university sectors

conducting a major survey of the expectations and destinations of senior high school students, their parents and teachers to better understand key transitions to post school pathways

commissioning ground-breaking research leading to improved apprenticeship completions

improving apprenticeship outcomes through expanded industry support for competency-based progression and completion, with over 35% of apprentices completing early based on demonstrated competency

managing the NSW contestable training market, investing some $289 million in training to meet NSW industry, regional and community skills priorities. This included: funding over 50,040 jobseeker and existing worker enrolments in priority qualifications through the Productivity Places Program; helping some 2,900 young people to get a start in a trade through the Kickstart and Group Training Pre-apprenticeship Programs; supporting 35,800 apprentice and trainee enrolments; and enhancing job and skill outcomes for 12,000 learners through the Strategic Skills Program

improving job outcomes by assisting 2,444 retrenched workers from 51 companies across NSW with training and employment opportunities: over 800 workers from BlueScope Steel and those from affected support industries will receive ongoing assistance during 2012

matching out of trade apprentices with employers through the Continuing Apprentices Placement Service, securing jobs for over 350 apprentices with new employers

improving job outcomes for Aboriginal people with over 8,000 Aboriginal people receiving training and employment support through targeted programs

establishing the Independent Employment Advisor Program to improve school retention and transition to work for 1,000 students at risk of dropping out of school in regions of high youth unemployment

developing a training strategy for 10,000 early childhood workers to meet national qualification requirements

moving responsibility for Adult and Community Education colleges to State Training Services to strengthen their integration into the NSW training market

developing the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan for the Department of Education and Communities

providing strategic analysis of current and emerging issues at State, national and international levels to inform policy development

managing a suite of evaluation projects to assess the impact, cost effectiveness and sustainability of Smarter Schools National Partnership reforms in NSW

establishing the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate within the Department of Education and Communities, reflecting the critically important role of the sector in the educational development of young children

providing high level secretariat support to an independent review of preschool funding in NSW

providing funding and other support towards the universal access objective of the National Partnership on Early Childhood Education and Care, with 86.2% of children
enrolled in an early childhood education program in 2010, compared to 81.1% in 2009

- establishing the legislative basis for the introduction in 2012 of new early childhood regulatory arrangements under the National Quality Framework

- coordinating an intensive program of consultation and education to prepare the early childhood sector for the introduction of the National Quality Framework in NSW

- continuing to implement a strategic monitoring program and taking appropriate action in cases of serious breaches of children’s services legislation, which resulted in successful prosecution action against 6 defendants representing 4 education and care services.
Improving the learning and social outcomes of every student in NSW government schools remains the key objective of the Department and is the core business of the Schools Portfolio.

Students in NSW government schools have access to a rich and varied curriculum delivered through quality teaching and strong school leadership. A firm grounding in both literacy and numeracy is of fundamental importance in all years of schooling and they continue to be a key driver of the work of the Schools Portfolio.

An analysis of NSW results in the 2011 NAPLAN tests revealed some very positive outcomes:

- the participation rates for NSW are the highest of all jurisdictions, for every test and at every Year level
- NSW is ranked in the top 3 jurisdictions for mean scores and percentages in the highest band on all tests except Year 7 and Year 9 Writing
- NSW is ranked in the top 3 jurisdictions (with ACT and Victoria) for percentages at or above the minimum standard on all tests except Year 7 Numeracy and Year 9 Writing
- NSW is ranked first in Spelling at all Year levels for mean score and for percentages in the highest band
- NSW is ranked first in Writing at all Year levels except Year 9 for percentages at or above the minimum standard
- NSW is ranked first in Numeracy at all Year levels except Year 3 for percentages in the highest band
- the NSW mean score in Year 3 Spelling has shown a statistically significant increase since last year
- the NSW mean scores in Year 3 Reading, Year 3 Grammar and Punctuation and Year 5 Numeracy have shown statistically significant increases compared with corresponding results in 2008.

Student learning in the early years of schooling has been supported by the Department through the expansion of the Best Start Initiative. Achievements in this program in 2011 included:

- implementing the Kindergarten Assessment process in all primary schools, involving over 3,700 teachers and 65,819 students
- developing enhanced software for use by all Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers, to generate early learning plans that address students’ individual literacy and numeracy learning needs
- developing tools to enable gifted and talented students to be identified and extended in the early years.

Other literacy and numeracy achievements included further developing the Literacy Learning Continuum K-6 and the Numeracy Learning Continuum K-6 to guide teachers’ programming, teaching and assessment.

The Schools Portfolio has also worked to improve school based analysis of student achievement data to support strategic whole school planning, including:

- releasing an enhanced School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (SMART 2) with a range of new features designed to assist with the interpretation and analysis of NAPLAN data
- trialling on demand online tests in reading and numeracy for students in Years 3-10 in National Partnership Low SES schools to determine progress being made by students in these important skill areas
- implementing a fully online, multimedia version of the Essential Secondary Science Assessment (ESSA) test for approximately 58,000 students in 584 NSW government and non-government schools, a world-first for size and complexity in online interactive tests. ESSA provides a yearly statewide test for 14-year-olds to supply diagnostic information about student achievement in science. The Department was awarded the 2011 Excellence in eGovernment Award (Applications Development Category) for the ESSA online practical component project.

The Department is committed to closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student outcomes. A key achievement for 2011 was the undertaking of an evaluation of the Department’s Norta Norta Individual Sponsorship Program, which is aimed at supporting senior secondary Aboriginal students to achieve their potential in Years 11 and 12, and involved 232 schools and an estimated 2,670 students. The evaluation will provide a longitudinal study of students participating in the program between 2010 and 2012 and will provide an evidence base for policy on effective strategies to
Schools, regions and state office Directorates share a strong commitment to providing educational opportunities in a wide range of curriculum areas. This approach is reflected in the outstanding learning and development outcomes achieved across a range of initiatives in 2011. These initiatives included:

- supporting schools in the development of structures, school based programs and networks to engage students continuing at school longer as a result of the Raised School Leaving Age legislation
- delivering arts programs to more than 38,000 school students and 6,000 teachers
- expanding the Premier’s Sporting Challenge programs to involve over 220,000 students
- launching the NSW Department of Education and Communities Confucius Institute in November 2011 to provide additional support for the teaching and learning of Chinese language and culture in NSW government schools
- coordinating 28 Outreach video conferences with award-winning and leading scientists in partnership with the University of New South Wales and Macquarie University, enabling 5 non-metropolitan regions and approximately 1,000 students and teachers to learn with a leading scientist. Highlighted speakers included 2 of the Eureka Award People’s Choice nominees for 2011 and 5 past winners of prestigious Tall Poppy Awards
- coordinating the Climate Clever Energy Savers program which involved 400 teachers in approximately 380 schools supporting students in Years 3-10 to investigate energy consumption in their schools and generate action plans to conserve energy
- strengthening the provision of vocational education and training in schools. More than a third of Year 11 and Year 12 students in NSW government schools engaged in vocational education and training in 2011 as part of their Higher School Certificate
- providing innovative online learning experiences through competitions and challenges such as Murder Under the Microscope (1,260 participating school teams), Connected Learning Awards (6,304 submissions from 634 schools) and the Kids Design Challenge
- delivering major professional learning support programs in nutrition and physical activity (Live Life Well@School), road safety education and sexual health education
- implementing, as partner agency, the NSW Plan for Preventing Obesity in Children, Young People and their Families 2008 - 2011. Schools were a key setting for the implementation of strategies including the Fresh Tastes Healthy School Canteen Strategy and the Premier’s Sporting Challenge
- implementing the Girls in Sport Intervention and Research Project, aimed at increasing the moderate to vigorous physical activity levels of girls in Years 8-10. Interim findings have been provided to the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women.

In 2011, the Department provided additional support for more than 35,000 students with a confirmed disability through targeted specialist programs including more than 15,500 students in regular classes through the Integration Funding Support Program and more than 19,000 students in support classes in regular and special schools.

The Department also:

- expanded the services of the NSW Centre for Effective Reading (providing support for primary aged students with complex reading needs in rural and remote communities) to include an intensive clinic for students and families and a website to provide more information and resources for teachers
- developed, in partnership with NSW Health, a website Physical as anything.com which provides information on more than 50 medical, developmental and psychological conditions and their educational implications
continued to train additional regional tutors through the online professional learning program, to strengthen the capacity of school staff supporting students with additional learning needs. There are now more than 330 trained tutors across the state. More than 8000 courses have been delivered through this program in the last 3 years.

- developed and launched a new online course, Understanding Dyslexia and Significant Difficulties in Reading
- prepared Braille versions of NAPLAN test papers for all States and Territories
- produced more than 1,515 text books in Braille or large print formats for students with vision impairment
- developed Best Start materials to support assessment and planning for students with disability in their first year of school.

NSW government schools provide educational opportunities to students from many diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including refugee students. Through the Department’s multicultural programs, $133 million was provided to deliver English as a Second Language programs to support some 86,600 students, including over 7,200 new arrivals, in primary schools, high schools and Intensive English Centres.

The fifth biennial equity conference Schooling for Futures was held during 2011. The primary goal of the conference was to explore schooling for the future of all learners in the 21st century. It brought together 1,042 participants from schools, regional and state offices, universities and community agencies to engage in national and international research and share strategies that improve student learning outcomes in low socioeconomic school contexts across NSW.

In 2011, the Government increased the focus on school attendance in conjunction with changes to the school leaving age. All regions sent staff to a state wide meeting with a focus on Keep Them Safe and school attendance. This work provided the platform for regional initiatives and school strategies to address habitual non-attendance and non-enrolment.

The Schools in Low SES Communities and Equity Coordination Unit released 2 new resources to support school communities in 2011. The resources include Connecting Agencies: Meeting priorities together, and Strengthening Community Engagement.

The Rural and Distance Education Unit continued to support the required changes in distance education as recommended in A More Connected Future: Outcomes of the Review of Distance Education. Released in 2010, this was the first review of distance education since a major restructure in the early 1990s. Significant outcomes for 2011 included the implementation of a shared learning repository, improved internal structures within schools and an emphasis on professional learning relating to learning design and collaborative technologies.

The Connections virtual excursions program continues to provide quality events bringing significant experiences and opportunities to students across NSW. In the first 3 school terms of 2011, a total of 50,700 students from 1,884 schools attended events ranging from cultural, scientific and sporting experiences to virtual tours of significant sites and venues. This service has achieved over a 400% increase in participation since 2008 when it was first introduced.

In 2011, there was a strong focus on initiatives to reduce bullying of children and young people in 2011. A new policy Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools was released in 2011. Guidelines and a range of support materials have been developed to support schools in reviewing and implementing their anti-bullying plans.

There was a particular focus on cyberbullying, which poses a challenge to schools. A Cyberbullying Awareness Training Package has been developed for school staff. The package includes a short multi-media presentation that can be shown to all staff, a PowerPoint presentation for use in staff meetings and an information sheet on cyberbullying for teachers.
During 2011, the Department’s drug prevention strategy was further strengthened by the implementation of funded action inquiry projects that enabled schools to identify local community issues and explore ways to best meet local needs.

Other drug prevention initiatives in 2011 included the Turning 18 magazine and website, made available to 42,000 Year 12 NSW government school students to help them celebrate the end of school safely and make the transition from school to further education and employment. The website received over 145,280 hits worldwide and 375 respondents provided feedback about the magazine.

Cannabis: Know the risks!, an electronic game for students in Years 9 and 10 to convey messages about the harmful effects of cannabis, was updated in 2011. Some 5,748 games were played and a total of 68,357 questions answered.

As part of the Department’s early intervention strategy, the publication Young People and Drugs was revised to help schools maximise support for young people at risk of misusing drugs. Three early intervention resources for secondary schools were developed. They were supported by the state wide delivery of 35 NSW Institute of Teachers’ registered professional learning workshops, attended by 459 teachers from 275 schools.

The Department is represented on the Australian Network on Youth and Tobacco (ANYPAT) which develops the anti smoking resource, Critics’ Choice. This year over 5,000 students from NSW Government schools participated in The Critic’s Choice 2011 competition that helps reinforce anti smoking messages.

The Nutrition in schools policy was implemented in government schools during 2011. The policy outlines actions for schools to ensure consistent modelling of healthy eating practices across all areas of food and drink provision, including the school canteen. A range of implementation documents and support materials are available to assist schools with implementation of the policy.

The Department continues to provide funding to NSW Health to implement the NSW Health Anaphylaxis Education Training Program for schools. This specialist training is available for staff at schools where a student has been diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis.

The Department commenced work on the Proud Schools pilot in 12 high schools in Sydney and Hunter Central Coast regions. The purpose of Proud Schools is to develop a whole school approach to assist schools address homophobia, transphobia and heterosexism. Sixty-two participants attended a conference in Sydney to discuss research, workshop ideas and commence planning the initial phase of implementation within their schools.

Student leaders from across the state participated in the Secondary School Student Leadership Program for School Captains. The program enabled students to develop their knowledge of parliamentary and constitutional processes by visiting the NSW Parliament and meeting with the NSW Governor, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, CVO.

Student leaders in secondary schools from each region participated in the Director-General for a Day 2011 Program, a program that has operated since 2004.

The Keep Them Safe Taskforce continued to meet to oversight the implementation of the Department’s responsibilities under the Government’s plan Keep Them Safe: a Shared Approach to Child Wellbeing.

The Norta Norta Program provides tailored learning support to individual Aboriginal students whose literacy and numeracy needs have been identified through NAPLAN testing and tutorial assistance for Year 11 and 12 students who apply at the beginning of each school year. Students are eligible for 75 hours each year. In 2011:

- approximately 682 schools provided learning assistance for Aboriginal students in Years 4, 6, 8 and 10. A total of 374 of these schools were in rural or regional areas
approximately 2,671 Aboriginal students in Years 11 and 12 were provided with tutorial assistance.

Implementation of Phase 3 of the Schools in Partnership initiative continued in 89 schools with significant Aboriginal student enrolments. The program aims to improve student outcomes by implementing targeted strategies developed in partnership with local school communities. A total of 64 Schools in Partnership initiative schools were in rural or regional areas.

Phase 2 of the Youth Excel initiative was implemented in 10 participating secondary schools in rural or regional areas to improve attendance rates and generate improved retention and educational outcomes for Aboriginal students. Schools employed a full-time Aboriginal identified Community Engagement Officer who focused on working with Aboriginal students, school staff, families and local communities.

Phase 2 of the Kids Excel initiative was implemented in 20 preschools (13 in rural or regional areas) to improve Aboriginal children’s educational outcomes by improving literacy, numeracy and attendance outcomes in the early years of schooling. Kids Excel supports schools to increase Aboriginal enrolments, deliver culturally appropriate curriculum and strengthen the engagement of Aboriginal parents and community members.

To assist Aboriginal communities to preserve, teach and use their community languages, 27 schools were funded to employ Aboriginal language tutors to facilitate the teaching of 11 Aboriginal languages and to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students from Kindergarten to Year 10 to learn an Aboriginal language.

A number of innovative projects that value the importance of Aboriginal parents and community members as partners in education were implemented. The Talk it Up initiative focused on strengthening the working relationships between schools and Aboriginal families through communication which involved increased face-to-face discussions and interviews as opposed to the more formal approach of written correspondence.

SistaSpeak involved a series of mentor-supported workshops that aim to engage and inspire Aboriginal girls in Years 7-9 to pursue their education, examine career options and work towards financial independence. In 2011, approximately 30 new schools implemented SistaSpeak, bringing the total number of participating schools to 52.

The Department and external partners, including the ABC, Legal Aid NSW and Xstrata Coal, provided a range of scholarships for Aboriginal Students in primary and secondary schools, to support their schooling and participation in vocational education or explore future career options.

A number of innovative projects assisted Aboriginal students with numeracy:

- the Wugual-Marri program supported the implementation of the Counting On and Count Me In Too programs and included the development of units of work in a mathematical strand that integrates an Aboriginal context
- the Mudjari’elo initiative focused on the teaching of financial mathematics and numeracy for trades for Aboriginal students and was developed in consultation with teachers in Juvenile Justice Centres.

The Department funds 312 Aboriginal Education Officer positions in NSW public schools to support students and assist school communities to achieve improved learning outcomes for Aboriginal students.

In 2011, more than $140 million was allocated to 522 schools through the Low SES School Communities National Partnership. The funding supported over 156,000 students from the most disadvantaged communities in the state.

The early years of learning and development prior to school are most significant for young children. This commitment is reflected in the:

- support to preschools from 10 early childhood consultants who work with principals of schools with preschools and preschool teachers to strengthen early childhood education
- increased number of enrolments in government preschools in 2011 with 4,462 compared to 4,325 in 2010
- the promotion and use of the Australian Early Development Index to inform planning for transition to school strategies and support for children under school age
45 Schools as Community Centres (SaCC) projects which facilitated a range of initiatives supporting around 4,000 families raising children from birth to 8 years, including supported playgroups, parenting programs, early literacy, adult learning, transition to school and child and adult health initiatives.

Links to Learning provided close to $8 million in grants to 55 non-government organisations and local councils in 2011. Organisations worked directly with around 228 secondary schools and other agencies to operate 79 targeted projects to support the transition of 3,600 young people back into school, training or the workforce across the Department’s 10 school regions.

The professional learning of NSW government school teachers and school leaders is a key priority for the Schools Portfolio. Key achievements for 2011 in developing quality teaching and school leadership included:

- developing and implementing an extensive suite of professional learning programs to assist all staff to meet their key accountabilities. These included 670 Institute registered programs to improve teacher and school leader quality
- expanding the Team Leadership For School Improvement K-12 program and The NSW DEC Analytical framework for effective leadership and school improvement in literacy and numeracy© for state wide delivery, following evidence of their success in improving school and student performance
- completing 2 significant research studies that contributed to the evidence base of the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership on the veracity and efficacy of the national standards for teachers, teacher leaders and principals. The research studies were:
  - Recognising, Building and Ensuring teacher Quality: The National Professional Standards for Teachers
  - Building Leadership Capacity for Tomorrow: The National Standard for Principals

providing equitable access to quality professional learning through blended, online school based delivery. This included over 100 hours of Institute registered professional learning through the Classroom Teacher Program and the introduction of the Leadership Learning Program aligned to key accountabilities of school leaders and the National Professional Standard for Principals.

The Department is committed to exploring better ways of doing business to deliver improved organisational effectiveness. In 2011, a successful review was completed of the School based Management Pilot Program exploring increased local decision making in 47 NSW government schools. Principals reported improvements in the quality of teaching and learning at participating schools with better educational outcomes and engagement of students, better student welfare support, increased professional support and opportunities for staff, and improved management of the school.
TAFE NSW is the leading provider of vocational education and training in Australia, delivering approximately two-thirds of all nationally recognised training conducted in New South Wales to a diverse range of students, industries and communities. TAFE NSW offers fully integrated pathways from school level qualifications through to applied undergraduate degrees.

TAFE NSW plays a major role in increasing workplace participation and productivity by developing unique training solutions for specific skill requirements, including niche high-end skills, for both students and industries.

TAFE NSW improves outcomes for the people of NSW by facilitating pathways into sustainable employment, so delivering on State and Commonwealth priorities.

In 2011 TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute marked the 120th anniversary of the opening of the Institute’s first permanent building, highlighting its continuous service to industry, students and the community.

Each of the 10 TAFE NSW Institutes respond to the wide range of learning needs across the community by providing customised training to specific target groups to ensure that all community members have access to high quality training and are able to fully participate in the workforce.

TAFE NSW continues to explore new and better ways of doing business, and works in consultation with industry and the community, to ensure that its training delivery supports high growth industries with strong job prospects.

TAFE NSW continues to strengthen its links with universities to expand delivery of pathway degrees combining vocational and higher education programs leading to a university degree. These pathways to higher education qualifications ensure that higher education is accessible to the working age population of NSW.

In 2011, TAFE NSW commenced delivery of its first degree, the Bachelor of Design (Interior Design). Higher education will be further expanded in 2012 with the introduction of bachelor degrees in Early Childhood Education and Care, Applied Finance (Financial Planning), 3D Art & Animation, Information Technology (Network Security) and an Associate Degree in Accounting.

In 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes, staff and students were recognised for excellence in a number of industry, state and national awards.

At the 2011 National Training Awards:

■ TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute was awarded the national Skills for Sustainability Educational Institution Award.

At the 2011 NSW State Training Awards:

■ TAFE NSW – New England Institute was awarded Large Training Provider of the Year
■ Brendon Hillsley, a student at TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute was awarded Apprentice of the Year
■ Galit Segev, a student at TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute was awarded Vocational Student of the Year
■ Bryan McFawn, a student at TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute was awarded Top Apprentice in Vehicle Trades.

Other awards in 2011 included the following:

■ Bob Houghton, a student at TAFE NSW – Western Institute, won the Gold Medal for Electrical Installation at the International WorldSkills Competition in London
■ Dallas Bray, Fine Arts and Design teacher at Hunter Institute, won the prestigious 2010 Kilgour Prize collecting $50,000 at the Newcastle Region Art Gallery for his entry Going to Town
■ Greg Christian, former Aboriginal Development Manager and Teacher at Illawarra Institute, was awarded the prestigious Bruce Kendall Award for Recognition of Services to TAFE NSW for his significant contribution to services in Aboriginal education and training at the TAFE NSW Gili Awards
■ TAFE NSW – Illawarra Institute won the Australian Business Award for Environmental Sustainability
■ TAFE NSW – New England Institute won the Green Gown Australia Sustainability in Tertiary Education award for its partnership arrangement with Northern Inland Sustainable Business Network (NISBN)
TAFE NSW

- TAFE NSW – Western Institute’s Broken Hill College restaurant was awarded the 2011 regional Award of Excellence for Restaurant in a Training Institute.
- TAFE NSW – Western Sydney Institute’s Travel21fiftythree Tourism section won the prestigious 2011 NSW Tourism Education and Training Award and is now the NSW representative in the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards.

In 2011 TAFE NSW:
- produced 214,492 graduates to strengthen the skills base of NSW
- delivered more than 119 million hours of training to 552,856 student enrolments
- generated business of approximately $7.9 million through the TAFE NSW National Business Office
- accounted for 90.9% of all apprenticeship completions and 87.2% of all apprenticeship approvals in NSW
- was successful in establishing several new training partnerships with clients through the TAFE NSW National Business Office, including the Institute of Public Works, Engineers Australia, Abigroup Constructions, and the Boating Industry of NSW
- enrolled approximately 4,600 international students from 96 countries in VET courses.

Between 2010 and 2011, TAFE NSW increased:
- unit enrolments in all modes of flexible based delivery by 12.8% from 1.4 million to 1.6 million
- the number of Recognition of Prior Learning hours by 11.3% from 6.8 million to 7.6 million
- enrolments at AQF III and above by 6.5% from 257,777 to 274,527
- enrolments at Diploma and above by 7.9% from 61,915 to 66,793.

Over the 5 year period from 2007 to 2011, TAFE NSW increased:
- enrolments by 11.1% from 497,747 to 552,856
- enrolments at AQF III and above by 35.0% from 203,343 to 274,527
- completions at AQF III and above by 39.9% from 56,693 to 79,330
- enrolments at Diploma and above by 48.1% from 45,099 to 66,793
- completions at Diploma and above by 53.0% from 11,443 to 17,503
- Aboriginal enrolments by 38.0% from 25,299 to 34,914
- Aboriginal enrolments at AQF III and above by 81.1% from 6,526 to 11,819
- Aboriginal graduates by 28.6% from 8,461 to 10,880
- Aboriginal graduates at AQF III and above by 96.9% from 1,146 to 2,256
- enrolments by students from regional/remote areas by 14.2% from 197,189 to 225,167
- enrolments by students with a disability by 21.9% from 46,351 to 56,499
- enrolments by students from languages other than English by 20.3% from 105,737 to 127,196
- enrolments by unemployed people by 47.8% from 91,825 to 135,736.

TAFE NSW worked hard to achieve successful outcomes, and in 2011:
- utilised Adobe Connect Pro that enabled 46,320 users, both teachers and students, to communicate using the latest web conferencing technology, with a total of 11,088 sessions
- continued to expand uptake of the TAFE NSW Learning Content Management System (EQUELLA), with a total of 18,000 items contributed and many new Institute collections created including image libraries, historical documents and library e-Resources
- published Getting clever about completions: Increasing TAFE NSW qualification completions which identified specific strategies that were subsequently implemented for improving outcomes for TAFE students.
made available 33 recognition tools (RPL Generators) to support TAFE NSW Institutes to develop RPL plans identifying “competency gaps”, and creating customised “gap” assessment activities.

- successfully tendered, in conjunction with University of Wollongong, for $25.1 million from the Education Investment Fund to research and apply newly created sustainable technology to approximately 50 public house dwellings (TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute).

- responded to legislative changes in qualifications requirements in Family and Community Services and Children’s Services through a range of strategies to upskill existing staff including RPL, workplace delivery and assessment and specialised gap training (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute).

- established the TAFE NSW – Parramatta Office, providing individuals, businesses and communities in the Greater Western Sydney area with easy access to the highly adaptable, flexible training and support services of TAFE NSW (TAFE NSW - Western Sydney and South Western Sydney Institutes).

- established an MOU with Gujarat NRE Coke Ltd, an Indian Steel company, to deliver skill sets and TAFE NSW qualifications to Indian students based in Ahmadabad (TAFE NSW - Sydney and Illawarra Institutes).

- formed a strategic alliance with Certified Practicing Accountants (CPA) Australia, Innovation Business Skills Australia, Charles Sturt University, the Australian Catholic University and the University of New England to deliver a ground-breaking Tertiary Pathway to Accounting Program consisting of a 2 year associate degree undertaken at TAFE followed by the third year of a university bachelor degree program (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney, Sydney, South Western Sydney, Western Sydney, North Coast and Riverina Institutes).

- launched TAFE NSW – Western Sydney’s Australian Racing and Equine Academy in partnership with Racing NSW, providing ‘best of breed’ on and off the job training and assessment for the racing and equine industries in NSW and beyond (TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute).

TAFE NSW works with industry to develop specialised training programs that support high growth industries with strong job prospects. For example, in 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- established a partnership with Pharmacy Choice® to deliver specialised training from Certificate II to Diploma level qualifications in Community Pharmacy and Retail through a national retail program for independent pharmacies across Australia (TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute).

- offered the innovative Mining Skills Centre program, developed in conjunction with employers, consisting of intensive training in automotive, electrical, metal fabrication and fitting and machining, to specifically meet the skill needs of the industries (TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute).

- in partnership with Airservices Australia, delivered a fully customised Diploma of Electronics and Communications Engineering to technical trainees. The graduates join the Airservices Technical and Asset Services group as technical officers (TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute).

- provided a range of workforce development services to AMCOR Paper, including skills audit, gap analysis and customised training, to assist them in redeveloping and modernising their production facility (TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute).

- provided a unique program based on the new Integrated Telecommunications (ITC) training package including high-end technology to upskill Telstra’s technical workforce (TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute).

- commenced construction of Autocel – Transport Technology Centre of Excellence, to meet the current and future skill needs of the automotive, marine, motorcycle and related transport sectors with Education Infrastructure Funding (TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute).

- commissioned 2 specialised mining simulators, one of which is mobile, to enable delivery of training in the use of equipment for both underground and open-cut mines in communities and worksites across western NSW (TAFE NSW - Western Institute).

- contributed to the skills base in the Illawarra as trainer of choice for BlueScope Steel, delivering specialised training to new apprentices, cadets and trades staff (TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute).
developed a leadership program focussing on Performance Management for Tamworth Regional Council, targeting Technical Officers and Team Leaders (TAFE NSW - New England Institute).

TAFE NSW provides a range of innovative and flexible training options to encourage new and better ways of doing business in NSW. For example, in 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- developed learning materials in conjunction with industry partners for Community Pharmacy Traineeships, enabling 90% of learning and assessment to be conducted on-the-job or online (North Coast Institute)
- implemented the Small Business Online project, providing over 1,200 small businesses in the northern areas of Sydney with e-commerce training (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute)
- developed a mobile environmental sustainability training resource, Turn your Place Green, which serves as an interactive learning unit for use throughout the community (TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute)
- delivered Create and Innovate Workshops that encouraged participants to develop options and ideas for engaging creativity and innovation in their workplace (TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute)
- developed the Energy Efficiency Lifestyle training program, in conjunction with State Training Services, which was implemented across 29 TAFE NSW sites and won the corporate award for Excellence in Training for Sustainability 2011.

TAFE NSW provides targeted training in areas of employment growth for students in regional and rural areas and Aboriginal people. For example, in 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- collaborated with Centrelink, the Department of Human Services and Aboriginal Elders to deliver a new course, Everyday Business for Aboriginal People. This course includes a Certificate II or III in Business, individual student mentoring and work experience (TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute)
- launched TAFE Western Connect to increase training options through online delivery, mobile learning units and connected classrooms (Western Institute)
- delivered the Waluwin Mayiny (healthy people) Indigenous Health Training Program in collaboration with Southern and Murrumbidgee Local Health Networks (TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute)
- developed and delivered Indigenous driver training programs via a collaborative arrangement with Joblink Plus and the region’s Aboriginal Land Councils (New England Institute)
- delivered the AusGrid Indigenous pre-apprenticeship program, comprising specific electrical trades training, customised literacy and numeracy support, work experience at the AusGrid Wallsend Depot and mentoring support (TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute).

TAFE NSW provides pre-apprenticeship training, a range of flexible training options and support services that assist young people to complete higher level qualifications and secure skilled job opportunities. For example, in 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- delivered a series of Kickstart pre-apprenticeship programs in conjunction with State Training Services, Woolworths and Castle Personnel (TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute)
- launched the online learning tool yourtutor providing students with access to personal one-to-one help (TAFE NSW - New England Institute)
- successfully implemented the Participation Phase Initiative program, designed in partnership with local high schools and community agencies, to provide youth at risk with combined vocational, literacy and employability skills (TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney and Sydney Institutes)
- introduced campus based RPL coaches who conducted workshops for administrative staff and teachers on RPL processing (TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute)
- installed the latest connectivity technologies including wireless internet access and video conferencing equipment to enable students and staff to link up, especially in rural areas, to extend their educational opportunities (TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute)
- applied strategies to improve apprentice completion rates, including early intervention, skills testing, streaming apprentices into skills capability groups and provision of tailored in-class tutorial support (TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute).
NSW Adult Migrant English Service

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.

AMES is a partner in the Department of Education and Communities Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Consortia which deliver services in Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and regional and rural NSW.

Key Achievements

■ In 2011, the Department of Education and Communities AMEP Consortia delivered AMEP courses to 3,581 migrants at 88 venues and through Distance Learning and online programs. This included delivery at 62 rural and regional delivery sites.

■ NSW AMES managed delivery of employment related courses under the state government funded Skillmax Program to 1,009 skilled migrants. The Skillmax Program assists migrants with overseas qualifications and work experience to secure employment in Australia at levels commensurate with their previous skills and experience. On successful completion of the Skillmax Program, students were able to participate in the Skilled Migrant Mentoring Program. This program, funded by NSW AMES and delivered in partnership with Adult and Community Education, offered access to an industry mentor and an opportunity to undertake work experience.

■ In 2011, NSW AMES conducted over 2,000 taxi driver English language assessments.

■ Linked skills courses were delivered to prepare newly arrived migrants and refugees for work in sectors experiencing skills shortages. Vocational skills courses were delivered by community colleges at AMES centres, while students were given language support by AMES teachers through the Certificate III in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) until June 2011. To assist with the transition into employment, the programs also incorporated work experience, job seeking skills and interviews with recruitment agencies. Vocational skills courses were offered in the areas of children’s services, aged care work, business administration, hospitality and retail.

■ NSW AMES continued to successfully market its online English learning resources, including CSWE Online, to higher learning educational institutions overseas. As part of this, NSW AMES delivered induction training for the English teachers at these institutions in the use of CSWE Online as a classroom learning and teaching resource. In 2011, AMES provided CSWE Online induction training for English teachers at the College of Business Administration for Managers, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Colleges under the jurisdiction of the Shanghai Higher Education Association of Non-Public Institutions, Shanghai, China.

■ The NSW AMES curriculum framework, CSWE, continued to be adopted by the UN Mission in Dili, East Timor. English language training using the curriculum and student workbooks and readers produced by NSW AMES are being offered to about 400 local staff employed by the UN Mission in East Timor.

Adult and Community Education

The Department supports community based adult and community education (ACE) colleges, also known as community colleges, across NSW to deliver vocational education and training to their local communities. Community colleges are embedded in local networks and are uniquely placed to link informal learning to formal training pathways.

NSW community colleges provide a primary network for the delivery of community education, reaching into local communities and complementing provision by TAFE NSW and private providers.

In 2010-11, 49 community colleges were funded to deliver vocational education and training. In 2011 approximately 6.3 million student contact hours of training were delivered. Of this, approximately 5.3 million hours were delivered in vocational education and training of which 4.7 million hours were supported with funding through the Department.
These colleges delivered a wide range of programs, from general vocational education and training to meet the needs of local communities and businesses, to programs targeting those who experience barriers to training and employment or are at risk of being socially excluded.

Colleges work collaboratively at local, regional and state level and their excellence has been recognised in a number of ways, with many colleges receiving local awards and others being recognised at the State and national level.

Some of these accomplishments include:

- Western College, Dubbo, being named winner of the National Community Pathways to Vocational Training and Education Award
- Byron Region Community College winning the Program Excellence category as awarded by Adult Learning Australia (ALA) for their Sustainability Program
- Port Macquarie Community College being inducted into the Hall of Fame with the Greater Port Macquarie 2011 Business Awards, in recognition of 4 consecutive years as the category winner for Education and Training and 3 years for Disability Friendly businesses
- Tamworth Community College winning the Excellence in Employment, Education and Training category as awarded by the Tamworth Chamber of Commerce.

The partnership between ACE and AMES continued to generate great outcomes for skilled migrants and refugees who are seeking to work in Australia. The many volunteer mentors and businesses in the community that share their expertise and insight into working in Australia provided these skilled migrants and refugees with the experience they needed to obtain work.

The partnership with the State Emergency Service continued to prosper with training for SES staff and volunteers across the state on working with communities that include Aboriginal people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

Partnerships with schools, where schools and ACE colleges collaborated to support young people at risk of not making a successful transition from school to further education or work, also grew. These projects funded through the ACE Social Inclusion Program have been varied and tailor-made to local needs.

With the support of the Department’s ACE Funding Program, community colleges have provided diverse vocational education and training programs to suit the needs of their local communities across NSW. In 2011, approximately 130,000 people from more than 3,000 communities (towns or suburbs) enrolled in courses with community colleges.
The Finance and Infrastructure Portfolio is responsible for the strategic management of finance, asset management, procurement and administrative services.

In 2011, the Portfolio implemented key programs to meet government priorities in public education and training. In particular the Portfolio:

- commenced the first rounds of funding under the $40 million Public School Upgrade fund and the $20 million additional minor maintenance program
- completed the $150 million Principals Priority Building Program
- finalised the 4 year, $2 billion Building Better Schools program
- finalised the State-wide Halls and Gyms programs
- continued delivery of the Commonwealth’s Building the Education Revolution program, which provided approximately $3.4 billion for capital works and maintenance projects in NSW government schools
- supported quality teaching and learning environments through the delivery of capital works, maintenance and asset acquisition programs
- continued development of the Finance Shared Service Centre which performs finance business processes and provides a single contact point for finance support for the Department’s corporate and state offices as well as TAFE NSW Institutes, NSW AMES and TAFE NSW business support units
- provided strategic financial advice, management and statutory reporting to ensure that finite government resources were allocated and used in an optimal, equitable and accountable manner
- managed the provision of financial support to non-government schools, as well as monitoring grants and subsidies to community groups and private VET providers
- participated in the project to provide 2010 finance data by NSW government school for the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)
- My School website
- implemented new operational structures to ensure Office of Communities financial information is reflected in all financial reporting, including to the Department’s executive and to NSW Treasury
- produced unqualified financial statements
- completed restructures of the Asset Management Directorate in May 2011 and the Finance Directorate in December 2011
- managed the provision of strategic procurement advice and the development of procurement policies and practices.

Finance and Infrastructure worked hard to achieve successful outcomes and has:

- improved physical learning environments for public schools in the 2010-11 financial year through the commencement of 8 new major capital works projects, continuation of 39 major works projects and completion of 18 major building projects
- improved physical learning environments for TAFE NSW in the 2010-2011 financial year through the commencement of 5 major building projects, continuation of 29 capital projects and completion of 15 major capital works projects
- completed 56 projects as part of Round 1 and 8 projects as part of Round 2 of the Commonwealth Trade Training Centres program, with a further 89 projects continued under both rounds
- replaced unflued gas heaters with flued gas heaters in 94 schools as part of the Unflued Gas Heater Replacement program
- completed 254 integration projects to improve access to school facilities for people with a disability
- delivered a further 462 projects, under the Primary Schools for the 21st Century component of the Building the Education Revolution. Total investment in NSW schools has now reached $2.8 billion
- delivered $84 million in savings through central procurement processes, of which 87% was returned to schools through lower prices. Student learning technologies delivered the greatest proportion of savings
Finance and Infrastructure

- implemented the Pay as You Print Optimisation Program to supply affordable, technologically advanced imaging equipment to schools across NSW. Since starting in May around 1,000 schools have registered to join the program, which promises an average 23% reduction in imaging print costs per year and a 28% reduction in fleet size.

- executed 33 procurement sourcing projects culminating in a total contract value of more than $580 million, including electricity, imaging devices, print management solutions, and computers etc.

- facilitated online transactions of more than $1.1 billion through the government’s electronic trading systems by developing, establishing and maintaining over 20 eCatalogues for schools, TAFEs and corporate purchasing activity.
The Workforce Management and Systems Improvement Portfolio is responsible for the strategic management of employee performance and conduct, employment screening, human resources, industrial relations, legal services, work health and safety, safety and security, information and communications technology services and the Learning Management and Business Reform Program.

In 2011, the Portfolio implemented key programs to meet government priorities and drive organisational performance. In particular the Portfolio:

- continued to implement teacher quality initiatives to support a high quality teacher workforce
- continued to drive the implementation of a range of reform initiatives under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships on Improving Teacher Quality and Low Socio economic Status School Communities (Low SES)
- continued to implement key recommendations of the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Plan 2009-2011
- continued to implement the Safe Working and Learning 2009-12 Strategy to improve work health and safety performance
- provided quality support to schools in preventing and managing safety and security incidents and in reducing the number of security breaches at our premises, particularly during vacation periods
- provided specialised legal and industrial relations advice and representation
- continued implementation of the Government Information (Public Access) Act, including improved structures for providing open public access to an increased range of departmental information

■ strengthened collaboration with the NSW Institute of Teachers and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership in developing processes to implement national reforms in teaching standards and initial teacher education accreditation
■ supported the recruitment of the first cohort of Student Support Officers as a part of the Government’s Supporting Students plan
■ developed plans for the implementation of the general assistant training fund, including the allocation of funds to 697 schools in Semester 1, 2012
■ provided technical leadership to support the ongoing delivery and transition to business as usual of the Digital Education Revolution initiative, which in NSW is providing wirelessly-enabled laptops to all Year 9 to 12 students in NSW public schools by 2012
■ completed the final installations under the $158 million Connected Classrooms Program which has provided NSW government schools with an interactive whiteboard and videoconferencing technology and has upgraded the speed, security and reliability of the Department’s wide area network
■ implemented new Public Interest Disclosures Policy and Guidelines and reporting requirements.

In 2011, Workforce Management and Systems Improvement achieved successful outcomes across a range of areas including:

■ appointing 84 Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs), comprising the appointment of 22 HATs to the 22 Tranche 2 Centres for Excellence, 47 HATs to the Low SES National Partnership Reform Extension Initiative schools and 15 HATs to schools participating in the Low SES School Communities National Partnerships
■ appointing over 62 full-time equivalent (FTE) new educational and operational paraprofessionals in Centres for Excellence and schools participating in the Low SES School Communities National Partnerships, and over 27 FTE paraprofessionals in schools participating in the 47 Schools Pilot under the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership and Youth Excel and Kids Excel initiatives
Workforce Management and Systems Improvement

- supporting beginning teachers through providing schools with the equivalent of 1 hour per week for each permanent on probation beginning teacher. In 2011, 3,048 beginning permanent on probation teachers across the State were supported through this initiative. In addition, the 2011-2012 Teacher Mentor Program commenced, with 50 FTE mentors appointed to support beginning teachers in 92 schools

- monitoring the implementation of the school staffing procedures, which are continuing to provide more opportunities for school communities to select the teachers who best meet their needs and for new and experienced teachers to apply for positions in schools in which they want to work. In the 2010-2011 staffing operation, schools had a choice of how they could fill 60% of vacant classroom teacher positions

- increasing the representation of Aboriginal people employed in the Department to 2.8%, an increase from 2.5% in 2010 (excluding Office of Communities)

- supporting enhancements for the Finance Shared Services solution as part of the Learning Management Business Reform program

- providing ongoing legal education and support to school principals and other departmental staff, including provision of extensive electronic resources and approximately 50 presentations on legal issues in education across the State

- further implementation and development of the system for enforcing school attendance, including legal proceedings being commenced in relation to over 400 students, approximately 76% of whom were high school students

- delivering information and communications technology systems and services to meet the teaching, learning and administration needs of 1.3 million Department staff and students, including technical support to assist schools in achieving their information and communications technology aims

- managing the Department’s data centres, telecommunications systems and infrastructure to support a connected teaching and learning environment

- building new Equella and Adobe Connect environments to underpin a virtual learning environment for TAFE

- delivering 1,600 state-of-the-art servers to NSW government primary schools that will provide the foundation for a more agile, responsive and adaptable set of ICT services for schools.

The Portfolio also contributed to the provision of safe and secure workplaces by:

- responding to almost 4,200 requests from schools for advice about violence, weapons, illegal drugs and other criminal matters. A total of 1,028 such incidents were reported by school staff who were supported and advised in managing those incidents

- providing training to approximately 500 school staff to assist them to better manage incidents involving violence, weapons, illegal drugs and other criminal activity. More than 4,000 senior school staff have now completed simulation exercises designed to prepare them to better manage such events

- reducing the number of security incidents experienced at schools during vacation periods

- checking over 75,000 applicants applying for child-related employment in the public and private education and training sector in NSW

- commencing a review of the regional work health and safety service delivery model to identify opportunities to strengthen the model and improve the delivery of work health and safety services to all schools, TAFE colleges and offices

- completing a Fire Safety Risk Management pilot project in schools and TAFE colleges to assess fire risk across departmental sites and make recommendations for improving management practices to further reduce the level of risk

- developing and implementing new procedures for managing non-work related injury and health conditions in accordance with the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet’s Procedures for Managing Non-Work Related Injuries or Health Conditions

- implementing a number of efficiencies in collaboration with the Department’s new Fund Manager, Allianz, including electronic transmission of incident notifications, wage reimbursement requests and electronic funds transfer.
Strategic Relations and Communication

The Strategic Relations and Communication Portfolio is responsible for corporate communication, corporate marketing, executive support, information management, media and risk management.

Key responsibilities include:

- promoting high-quality public education and training in NSW
- providing easily accessible information and advice to parents, principals, teachers, students and the broader community
- providing promotional support to NSW public schools
- responding quickly and effectively to a large number of media enquiries to promote openness and transparency in public education
- promoting the achievements of TAFE NSW and NSW public schools, students, teachers and the Department’s policies and programs
- providing strategic advice to senior staff and the Minister’s office and support in risk management, business continuity and corporate governance.

In 2011, Strategic Relations and Communication achieved successful outcomes in a large number of areas. These included providing the Director-General and the Minister with quality and timely correspondence and briefings, and assisting the Department as a whole to provide the Minister’s office with high-quality media and parliamentary support. The Portfolio continued to build on previous work to meet parent, teacher and community expectations regarding easy access to information using new technologies, and promote the work of principals, teachers and staff in NSW public schools and TAFE institutes.

In 2011, Strategic Relations and Communication:

- saw an expansion of the media unit’s role in supporting the Director-General and the Minister’s office in responding to enquiries from NSW and national news organisations through the addition of the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate and Communities Portfolio
- provided the Department’s executive staff with strategic advice to deal with issues attracting significant media attention and conducted workshops with principals and school education directors on best practice in working with local journalists
- managed national press inquiries including NAPLAN, the My School website, the National Curriculum and the Gonski Review of school funding, along with a wide range of state and local education issues
- provided expert information and advice to parents on the various stages of schooling through innovative and appealing products such as:
  - School A to Z, an online school community, including a website, mobile apps and social networking sites. The resource provides parents with practical homework and study support, child health and wellbeing information, along with advice on technology use and keeping kids safe online
  - School A to Z folder, a welcome to school pack for parents of Kindergarten students that includes an organiser, homework helpers and general school information
  - Welcome to Preschool, A Special Place and Time to Start Year 7 publications
- provided internal communication support in change management, policy promotion, customer service and communication best practice through advice, speeches, social media (casts, vodcasts and blogs), and user-centred internet and intranet development. Programs given support included: National Partnerships, NAPLAN, Digital Education Revolution - NSW, Building the Education Revolution, Learning Management and Business Reform, Disability Services, Ecological Sustainability Group (environment awards) and the National Quality Framework
- consulted widely on communication with major departmental stakeholders including the Federation of Parents and Citizens Association of NSW, the Primary Principals’ Association and Secondary Principals’ Council
- provided support to principals, teachers and departmental state officers on how to promote high-quality public education.
Strategic Relations and Communication

in NSW. This included workshops with 212 schools and learning communities on how to develop consistent online and traditional communication and further workshops on excellent customer service with 600 school administrative staff

■ helped to establish 14 new learning communities with 104 schools

■ provided news and information through the online service, Side by Side, to public school principals, teachers and school support staff and launched SchoolBiz, a weekly information service for school staff, replacing InPrincipal

■ developed a portal that will function as a one-stop-shop for the information and tools staff use in their daily work

■ reached the significant goal of 1,350 schools registering for the School Website Service, providing schools with their own easily maintained websites, and developed Pario, a service allowing specialist education centres to create and maintain their own websites e.g. environmental centres

■ redeveloped the Department’s main public website to incorporate the new agencies that comprise the NSW Department of Education and Communities and maintained the Department’s core online services including the public corporate and NSW Public Schools websites and staff intranet

■ developed a policy and guidelines for the use of social media in the Department and promoted the use of social media channels such as Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, and internal microblogs Yammer and Maang to engage staff, parents and other key stakeholders more effectively

■ provided online access to reports, statistics and information sets in the interests of openness and transparency in public education

■ continued to highlight the issue of cyberbullying between young people and provided advice and guidance for parents

■ responded to more than 5,500 phone calls and 5,120 email enquiries from internal and external clients with enquiries ranging from health matters in schools to staffing and interpretation of departmental policies

■ managed Education Week. An opportunity for NSW public schools to celebrate their successes, highlights during the week included the Education Week simuLaunch with participation from more than 5,000 students in 20 locations, Director-General for a Day (where selected students shadowed senior Department executives), the Great Schools Show Off NSW (where students from 210 schools produced promotional videos), the State Student Representative Council Annual Conference and the Sydney Region Formula One Technology Challenge exhibition

■ managed the marketing of the 2011 Learning for Sustainability awards project where 20 outstanding schools, TAFE NSW and corporate nominations received awards for excellence

■ coordinated the ‘Maroon for a Day’ donations with 1,150 schools raising more than $501,500 for Queensland flood-damaged public schools along with ‘Primary Colours’ an art program, which raised $2,853 for Stewart House

■ conducted the RSL and Schools Remember ANZAC Commemoration Ceremony at the ANZAC Memorial Hyde Park, in conjunction with the Returned and Services League of Australia (NSW Branch), the Association of Independent Schools of NSW and the Catholic Education Commission NSW. More than 1,500 people from 43 NSW public schools, 32 independent schools and 27 Catholic schools attended the service

■ conducted the ANZAC Remembrance Service in conjunction with the Teachers’ Sub-Branch of the RSL on ANZAC day at the Bridge Street office with 150 attendees and presented the ANZAC exhibition featuring memorabilia from the Vietnam Veterans St Marys Outpost sub branch

■ provided marketing grants of $6,000 to each of the Department’s 10 regions, Funds were used by 9 communities of schools, 23 public schools, 13 high schools and 2 central schools

■ provided marketing assistance and websites for the Schools Spectacular and the associated World’s Biggest Classroom exhibitions in conjunction with the Arts Unit, coordinated the Department’s representation of public school and TAFE NSW students at the International Women’s Day Breakfast and provided assistance to the Federation of Parents and Citizens Association NSW annual conference dinner
promoted the inaugural NSW International Student Festival managed by the Community Engagement and Events Office of the Premier and Cabinet, included the International Student of the Year Awards. A TAFE NSW Northern Beaches College student won the VET Education and Training Award

provided staff assistance to the Macquarie ICT Innovations Centre exhibition at the WHEN 2050 exhibition at Sydney College of the Arts, featuring virtual worlds in 3D by Dulwich High School of Visual Arts and Design

coordinated events and exhibitions including: the Bridge Street NAIDOC exhibition featuring student works from the School of Fine Arts TAFE NSW Western Sydney Institute; the Martin Place Dance Festival Showcase in association with the Arts Unit; Bridge Street exhibitions with 6 exhibitions from public schools and 3 from TAFE NSW

promoted departmental participation in White Ribbon Day, Remembrance Day and key sustainability activities such as Earth Hour, Schools Clean Up Day and Schools Tree Day

coordinated executive and departmental Christmas cards designed by NSW public school students in the Connected Learning Awards managed by the NSW Curriculum and Learning Innovation Centre

managed copyright for schools and TAFE NSW institutes and responded to their copyright queries

registered and processed 1,893 letters to the Director-General, 6,559 items of Ministerial correspondence and 1,579 briefing requests for the Minister and Director-General

managed more than 5,744 campaign or petition letters and emails on a range of issues such as the Ethics Trial, TAFE NSW reform, family day care, school funding and staffing issues

managed protocols and coordinated briefings for Director-General and Ministerial visits to colleges and schools

implemented an Enterprise Risk Management capability framework that provides risk management processes and tools

successfully implemented through the Enterprise Information Management program new enterprise business intelligence platforms. The capability supports improvements in evidence-based decision-making, efficient and responsible use of public funds, and ensures continuous improvement and organisational learning. The program was extended by the Executive to deliver a number of business projects to take advantage of the new platforms.
The Office of Communities manages its diverse Portfolio through 2 groups, the Communities group and the Sport and Recreation group.

The Communities group delivers services to make it easier for people to be involved in their communities, including services to children and young people, strengthening targeted local and regional communities, supporting Aboriginal people and communities to advance the wellbeing of Aboriginal people, harnessing the strong desire of people to improve and protect local neighbourhoods through volunteering, protecting children by screening employees working in child-related employment through the Working with Children Check, and regulating Out-of-Home Care services.

- **Aboriginal Affairs** works in partnership with Aboriginal people, and with government agencies and the private and community sectors to advance the wellbeing of the estimated 170,096 Aboriginal people who live in NSW. This includes working to see Aboriginal people exercise and pursue their right and capacity to determine their political, economic, social and cultural development.

- **The Children’s Guardian** promotes and safeguards the best interests and rights of children and young people by regulating the provision of out-of-home care and adoption services, and the employment of children under the age of 15 in entertainment, exhibition, still photography or door-to-door sales, or children under the age of 16 for any type of modelling.

- **The Commission for Children and Young People** makes recommendations on laws, policies, practices and services that affect children and young people, conducts child-related research and manages the Working With Children Check process in NSW.

- **Veterans’ Affairs** works in partnership with Returned and Services League (NSW), Department of Veterans’ Affairs, ex-service organisations, local councils, and community groups to lead the State’s remembrance of our wartime history, and commemorative activity. They facilitate the conservation and recording of the historic collection of war memorials throughout NSW and educates future generations to ensure the sacrifices of service men and women are understood and remembered. In the 9 months to December 2011: $109,590 was provided to restore and upgrade 17 war memorials in NSW; the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre were assisted; the Government’s reforms in management and administration of the ANZAC Memorial Building were finalised; 2 Premier’s Anzac Memorial Scholars pilgrimages were organised so that the NSW Government was represented at the Anzac Day Dawn Service at Long Tan, and the Gallipoli battlefields in Turkey and at the Second World War battlefields and cemeteries in Greece and Crete.

In the next 12 months Veterans’ Affairs will continue to support the NSW Government in raising public awareness of the Anzac spirit. It will also promote appropriate commemoration within communities to recognise the sacrifices made by Australians in both, conflicts and peacekeeping in the lead up to the Centenary of the First World War 2014-2018.

- **Youth Strategy and Participation** coordinates whole-of-Government youth policy development and implementation, manages youth development initiatives including Youth Week and the Better Futures program and supports youth engagement and consultative frameworks and processes including the NSW Youth Advisory Council.

- **Volunteering** monitors oversees and implements volunteering commitments in NSW 2021 and coordinates cross-Government strategies and initiatives that support volunteering.

- **Community and Regional Engagement** undertakes community and participation work in targeted communities at local and regional level and strengthens the Office’s presence and coordination across NSW. In doing so it maximises the impact and reach of Office services, facilities, events, funding, regulation and other activities, and provides a coordinated point of contact for local communities and agencies to link up with the Office.

The sport and recreation group represents some of the State’s major urban stadia and events centres as well as the
principal sport and recreation policy and funding functions for NSW. Agencies within this group manage major sport and entertainment facilities.

- **Hunter Region Sporting Venues** oversees and manages sporting and entertainment venues in Newcastle. These venues include the Hunter Stadium (with a capacity of 33,000), Newcastle Entertainment Centre, Newcastle Showground and Exhibition Centre, Harness Racing Club, Newcastle Hockey Centre; and District Park, a large open facility.

- **Illawarra Venues** operates 2 adjoining venues in Wollongong – the 6,000-seat indoor WIN Entertainment Centre and the 20,000-capacity outdoor WIN Stadium. These venues are hired by event promoters, local organisations and sporting teams to stage a variety of entertainment, cultural, international and amateur sporting events throughout the year.

- **Parramatta Stadium** is a multi-purpose venue that hosts sporting and community activities and other entertainment attractions.

The **Sporting Venues Authorities Amendment (Venues NSW) Act 2011** (the Act) received assent on 16 November 2011. The Act amends the **Sporting Venues Authorities Act 2008** and repeals the **Parramatta Stadium Trust Act 1988** and Parramatta Stadium Trust By-law 2010. The purpose of the Act is to abolish existing regional sporting venues authorities and the Parramatta Stadium Trust and establish a new authority, Venues NSW. The Act will commence on proclamation expected in March 2012.

- **Sport and Recreation** supports the sector through grants to sports bodies for facilities and programs and delivers sport, recreation and education programs. There are 11 Sport and Recreation Centres and 9 regional offices across NSW providing a chance for people of all ages to be active, enjoy the outdoors, develop skills and participate in the community. Sport and Recreation also administer the Sydney International Equestrian, Shooting and Regatta Centres based in Western Sydney.

- **Sydney Olympic Park** has a diverse role in overseeing and developing the Sydney Olympic Site, ensuring it continues to be an active and vibrant town centre within metropolitan Sydney and a premier destination for cultural, entertainment, recreation and sporting events.

Complementing its service delivery functions, the Office is also the lead agency for community engagement and inclusion strategies outlined in the **NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One**. To achieve this, the Office trials innovation and develops the knowledge and resources required to support the implementation of the government’s commitment to strengthening local communities. In fulfilling its mandate as the lead agency in NSW for community wellbeing, the Office works across government and communities to enable and support local decisions and solutions – it is a hub of information, knowledge and expertise in its role as a community “enabler”.

![Image of cyclists](https://example.com/cyclists.jpg)
Active communities

- $6.4 million was invested in sport and recreation projects and organisations to increase participation opportunities.
- 284,612 people attended Sport and Recreation Centre programs (191,669 in 2011), including 4,964 Aboriginal people (3,249 in 2011), 5,101 people with a disability (3,354 in 2011), and 19,790 people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (12,380 in 2011).
- 60,480 people participated in activities hosted by the Sydney International Shooting Centre (49,941 in 2011) including 700 athletes participating in the ISSF World Cup.
- 634,854 people participated in activities hosted by the Sydney International Regatta Centre (428,564 in 2011).
- 170,088 people participated in activities hosted by the Sydney International Equestrian Centre (118,371 in 2011).
- Parramatta Stadium hosted 15 sporting events.
- $109,590 to restore and upgrade 17 war memorials in NSW.
- $7.7 million for a major regional playground at Blaxland Riverside Park.
- $27,000 towards the Volunteer of the Year awards.
- 50 projects funded to engage young people in sports and cultural activities building their communication and leadership skills.
- Reviewed the Better Futures program.
- Consulted 400 people, and nearly as many volunteer-engaging organisations, to inform the State’s first volunteering strategy.

Diverse communities

- The NSW Government established the Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs to produce a government strategy in NSW to improve education, employment and service delivery to the Aboriginal people of NSW and released a series of community discussion papers for public comment.
- 23 of the 40 Aboriginal communities in the Partnership Community Program had their community governance body recognised.
- Promoted the active participation of Aboriginal people in sport and physical activity and encouraged community ownership and management of sport and physical recreation activities.

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Performance Highlights\(^1\)

Connecting and supporting communities

- More than 100,000 young people attended Youth Week 2011 from 1-10 April, with 800 events and activities and all 152 local government areas.
- Sydney Olympic Park precinct played host to 12.5 million people.
- The Sydney Olympic parklands exceeded 2.6 million visits annually.
- 20 students attended battlefield pilgrimages to Vietnam, Gallipoli and Greece.
- The WIN Entertainment Centre hosted 85 days of events with a total attendance exceeding 160,000.
- The new Western Grandstand at WIN Stadium was constructed.
- $109,590 to restore and upgrade 17 war memorials in NSW.
- $7.7 million for a major regional playground at Blaxland Riverside Park.
- $27,000 towards the Volunteer of the Year awards.
- 50 projects funded to engage young people in sports and cultural activities building their communication and leadership skills.
- Reviewed the Better Futures program.
- Consulted 400 people, and nearly as many volunteer-engaging organisations, to inform the State’s first volunteering strategy.

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\(^1\) These highlights are drawn from different reference periods. Key achievements are reported for the period 2010-11 for the following statutory authorities: The Children’s Guardian, the Commission for Children and Young People, Sydney Olympic Park Authority, and Illawarra Venues. The period reported for Parramatta Stadium is 2010. The achievements reported for Aboriginal Affairs and NSW Veterans’ Affairs is for the period 24 April to 31 December 2011, reflecting the revised administrative arrangements in the NSW Government which took effect in April. The reference period for all other Portfolio areas is 1 July 2010 to 31 December 2011.
- Supported 27 regional initiatives linking people with a disability, sporting clubs and associations, and community disability support organisations.
- Hosted a seminar series on the middle years of childhood covering physical development, social and emotional development and risks.
- Provided camps for school students tailored to address cultural beliefs and customs.

**Safer communities**

- Completed 84,659 pre-employment criminal history checks for child-related employment.
- Improved the children’s employment regime so that the Children’s Guardian has relevant information about the circumstances of each child’s employment.
- Accredited 49 agencies to provide statutory out-of-home care and commenced updating the NSW Out-of-Home Care Standards and the accreditation process.
- Established the Register of Voluntary Out of Home Care Agencies with 148 agencies registered between February 2011 to 30 June 2011.
- Made sport safer through the initiatives such as Sport Rage Prevention, Anger Education, Child Protection Courses and Drugs in Sport.
- Tackling Violence Program ran in 14 communities with 17 Rugby League clubs involved.
- 120 students from regional schools took part in 3 sporting camps focused on domestic violence and healthy relationships education.
Our outcomes
Our outcomes in early childhood education

High expectations, closing the gaps

**NSW 2021 targets and Government priorities**

- All children have access to a quality early childhood education program in the 12 months prior to formal schooling, by 2013
- Boost preschool participation rates to ensure at least 95% of 4-year olds attend preschool 2 days a week
- All Aboriginal 4-year-olds have access to a quality early childhood education program by 2013
- Increase the proportion of children ready for school, as measured by the Best Start literacy and numeracy assessment, when children start school
Our outcomes in early childhood education

High expectations, closing the gaps

Participation in early childhood education programs

The most recent data demonstrates that in 2010 the proportion of children enrolled in an early childhood education program in NSW had increased to 86.2%, compared to 81.1% in 2009.

The proportion of disadvantaged children accessing early childhood education programs also increased. In 2010, 89.5% of disadvantaged children were enrolled in an early childhood education program, up 14.3 percentage points compared to 2009.

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of Aboriginal children enrolled in an early childhood education programs over recent years, and this trend continued in 2010. Aboriginal children now make up 5.3% of all children enrolled in early childhood education programs, compared to 4.5% in 2009.

Best Start Kindergarten Assessment

The 2011 Best Start Kindergarten Assessment process was conducted in all public schools with primary enrolments. This involved more than 3,700 teachers and 65,819 Kindergarten students. In 2011:

- 94% of students achieved Level 1 or higher on one or more aspects of the Best Start Numeracy Assessment
- 80% of students achieved Level 1 or higher on one or more aspects of the Best Start Literacy Assessment.

The 2011 implementation of Best Start involved:

- development of enhanced software, for use by all Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers, to generate early learning plans that address students’ individual literacy and numeracy learning needs
- provision of reading recovery support for more than 10,000 students who experienced serious difficulty in learning to read and write
- supporting colleagues in delivering quality literacy and numeracy teaching and learning programs by making 106 full-time equivalent teaching positions available to provide release time to expert teachers
- continued implementation of the Targeted Early Numeracy (TEN) intervention program (25 facilitators trained 1,000 K-2 teachers)
- implementation of Language, Learning and Literacy - L3 (58 facilitators trained 872 Kindergarten teachers to assist students who recorded extremely low scores on the Best Start Assessment of Literacy)
- development of additional tools and resources to enable gifted and talented students to be identified and extended in the early years.
Our outcomes in early childhood education

Quality teaching and leadership

Government commitments and priorities

- Implement the National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care, with a focus on improving educator to child ratios and increasing the number of qualified early childhood educators
- Focus on building the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators
Our outcomes in early childhood education

Quality teaching and leadership

The National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care

In 2011, a number of major milestones were met in the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care. Under the Agreement all Australian Governments have committed to a new national scheme of regulation for early childhood education and care and school age care services, which commenced on 1 January 2012.

The elements of the scheme, collectively referred to as the National Quality Framework (NQF), include a new national law and regulations and assessment and rating of services against a National Quality Standard to promote high quality and consistent early childhood education and care across Australia. In NSW around 5,500 services will be covered by the scheme, including out of school hours care services which are to be regulated in NSW for the first time. The scheme also covers long day care, preschools, kindergartens and family day care.

During the year the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate (which became part of the Department in May 2011) worked with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories and with national and NSW stakeholder reference groups to develop the detailed underpinnings of the national scheme, national regulations and associated guidance for service providers. An exposure draft of the regulations was released in March 2011 and the Directorate held 15 consultation sessions about the draft regulations across the State. In October and November 2011 the Directorate held a number of information sessions about the finalised regulations, which were formally made in December 2011 and commenced in January 2012.

During 2011, the Directorate provided a telephone and email inquiry service which responded to over 27,300 telephone inquiries and 5,600 email inquiries.

Building the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators

The knowledge and skills of early childhood educators have a major influence on the quality of services they provide, which is in turn linked to outcomes for children in their care. Raising educators’ knowledge and skill levels is therefore at the core of the new national scheme for the regulation of these services.

The Directorate gave high priority to its new web page on the Department’s website which was launched in October 2011. It brings together a number of resources to help all participants in the early childhood education and care sector to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the NQF. A ‘bumper’ NQF edition of Building Blocks, the Directorate’s quarterly newsletter, coincided with the making of the national regulations.

Funding was provided to enable the NSW Professional Support Coordinator (Children’s Services Central) to extend NQF related training to the preschool sector.

The NSW Government’s training strategy, New Skills: Quality Care, was launched in December 2011. Under this strategy, educators can receive subsidised training and assessment to gain formal qualifications they will need under the NQF.

Improving the quality of early childhood education

Throughout 2011, the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate was integral to the development of regulations for the NQF, which progressively introduces new requirements to raise the qualification levels of educators and improves educator to child ratios.

The Directorate also carried out a range of activities to raise services’ awareness of the improvement in the educator to child ratio for children under 2 years of age in centre-based or mobile services from 1:5 to 1:4, which commenced from 1 January 2011. This change reflects the ratio that applies under the NQF from 1 January 2012.

The Directorate also actively promoted the NSW Government’s training strategy, New Skills: Quality Care, under which educators can receive training and financial support to gain formal qualifications to meet the NQF requirements. The strategy provides subsidised training and assessment for those yet to receive any formal qualifications.
Our outcomes in early childhood education

New and better ways of doing business

Government commitment

Conduct a review of funding of early childhood education in NSW, which will recommend strategies to support increased participation in early childhood education
The Office of Education provided support during 2011 for a major review of funding for early childhood education. The review, which was launched in mid-August by the Minister for Education, was tasked with making recommendations on how State funding for the sector can best support achievement of the NSW 2021 targets for more young children to participate in early childhood education. Professor Deborah Brennan, respected social policy academic from the University of NSW, was appointed as reviewer.

There were wide ranging consultations across NSW and significant research looking into national and international models. The review continues examining the many excellent suggestions, investigating workable options and finalising recommendations, with a report expected later in 2012.

The centrepiece will be recommendations for a funding model that can support achievement of the NSW 2021 target that as many children as possible in NSW have access to an affordable, high-quality early childhood education program in the 12 months before they start school. In forming her advice the reviewer will take account of best practice funding approaches in Australia and overseas.
Our outcomes at school
High expectations, closing the gaps

NSW 2021 targets and Government priorities

- Increase the proportion of students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 achieving at and above the national minimum standards in reading and numeracy
- Increase the proportion of students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the top 2 performance bands for reading and numeracy
- Participation of NSW students in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests consistently exceeds the national average for participation
- Halve the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in reading and numeracy by 2018
- Increase to 90% the proportion of 20-24 year olds who have completed Year 12 or attained a qualification at Certificate II or above by 2015
- Increase to 90% the proportion of 20-24 year olds who have completed Year 12 or attained a qualification at Certificate III or above by 2020
- Increase to 90% the proportion of 20-24 year olds in rural and regional NSW who have attained a Year 12 or AQF Certificate III qualification or above by 2020
- Halve the gap in Year 12 or equivalent attainment for Aboriginal 20-24 year olds by 2020
- Improve Year 12 completion rates for students in low Index of Community Socio-Education Advantage (ICSEA) schools
- Increase to 60% the proportion of students with a confirmed disability who have a personalised learning and support plan
- Provide a standards framework and best practice guide to support the development of personalised learning and support planning for students with a disability
- Implement personalised learning plans for all Aboriginal students
Our outcomes
at school

High expectations, closing the gaps

Literacy and numeracy outcomes for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9

In 2011, the proportion of students performing at or above the national minimum standard for reading and numeracy was above the national average in all 4 testing years, as was the proportion achieving in the top 2 bands.

Figure 1: Percentage of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in 2011

Source: MCEECDYA (2011), 2011 National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy
NSW is mostly ranked in the top 3 jurisdictions, along with the ACT and Victoria, on both measures: the proportion of students at or above the national minimum standard and the proportion of students achieving results in the top 2 bands for NAPLAN performance.

Between 2008 and 2011, there were no statistically significant changes in the performance of NSW students in Years 3, 5 and 7 reading and Year 3 numeracy.

However, there were statistically significant decreases in the performance of NSW students for Year 9 reading and for Years 7 and 9 numeracy.

There was a statistically significant improvement in the performance of NSW students for Year 5 numeracy in 2011 when compared with 2008.

Since 2008, the proportion of students in the top 2 bands has increased for Years 3, 7 and 9 reading and Year 5 numeracy.

Figure 2: Percentage of students achieving in the top 2 bands in 2011

Source: MCEEDYEA (2011), 2011 National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy
Our outcomes at school

High expectations, closing the gaps

Participation in NAPLAN testing

NSW participation in NAPLAN is above the national average in all 4 testing years and the highest of all jurisdictions for every test at every year level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading (%)</th>
<th>Numeracy (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: MCEECDYA (2011) 2011 National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy

Closing the gaps: reading and numeracy outcomes for Aboriginal students

In 2011, Aboriginal students in NSW achieved the following results compared to non-Aboriginal students.

Figure 3: Percentage of NSW Aboriginal students achieving at or above the national minimum standard in 2011
Figure 4: Percentage of NSW Aboriginal students achieving in the top 2 bands in 2011

NAPLAN READING 2011

NAPLAN NUMERACY 2011

Source: MCEECDYA (2011) 2011 National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy Achievement in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions and Numeracy
Our outcomes at school

High expectations, closing the gaps

Since 2008, the gap between the proportion of NSW Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students achieving at or above the national minimum standard has narrowed in reading for Years 3, 5 and 7, and in numeracy for Years 3 and 5.

Between 2010 and 2011, the gap narrowed in numeracy for all year levels and for Year 9 reading.

Educational attainment for 20-24 year olds in NSW

Between 2006 and 2009, the proportion of 20-24 year olds who achieved Year 12 or at least a Certificate II or III qualification rose around 4 percentage points, but fell back to 2008 levels in 2011.

These measures are calculated from a sample survey for which there is a known standard error. When this error is taken into account, none of the changes over this period are statistically significant and are considered to be within the normal year-on-year fluctuations.

Similar declines were observed nationally and for Victoria and Queensland. The ABS has investigated these apparent declines and advised that such fluctuations are to be expected and are largely due to sampling variability between years.


Educational attainment for 20-24 year olds in rural and regional areas

Since 2006, the proportion of 20-24 year olds living in rural and regional NSW who have attained Year 12 or a Certificate III qualification or above has also fluctuated, being lowest in 2006 (70.8%) and highest in 2010 (76.6%). In 2011, the proportion fell to 71.6%.

This measure is also calculated from a sample survey for which there is a known standard error.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has investigated the matter and advised that these fluctuations are to be expected and simply due to sampling variability between years.

Attendance, retention and attainment

Year 12 completion rates in low ICSEA schools

There has been little change in the proportion of young people living in low socioeconomic communities who complete Year 12. In 2010, the rate was 15 percentage points lower than for young people from high socioeconomic status communities.

Year 12 completion in low socioeconomic areas is higher in NSW than for Australia overall and the gap between low and high socioeconomic status students narrower.

Figure 8: Year 12 completion rates by socioeconomic status deciles

Note: each floating number indicates the gap between the highest and lowest SES deciles, expressed as percentage points

Our outcomes at school

High expectations, closing the gaps

Retention rates for Aboriginal students

In 2011, there were improvements in each of the apparent retention rate measures for Aboriginal students.

Between 2005 and 2011, the Year 7-10 rate for Aboriginal students improved by 26.9 percentage points (pp), with the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students being closed in 2011.

**Figure 9: Apparent retention rates for Years 7-10 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (2005-2011)**

Between 2005 and 2011, the Year 10-12 apparent retention rate for Aboriginal students improved by 10.4 pp, with the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students narrowing from 33.4 to 27.7 pp over 7 years.

**Figure 10: Apparent retention rates for Years 10-12 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (2005-2011)**

Between 2005 and 2011, the Year 7-12 apparent retention rate for Aboriginal students improved by 9.8 pp, with the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students narrowing from 38.0 to 33.0 pp over 7 years.

**Figure 11: Apparent retention rates for Years 7-12 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (2005-2011)**
Despite these improvements, there remain significant gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students for Year 10-12 and Year 7-12 apparent retention measures.

**Attendance rate for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students**

The attendance rate for Aboriginal students was 84.4% in 2011, 0.1 pp lower than in 2006. The gap to non-Aboriginal students has increased by 0.1 pp over the same period, from 7.5 pp in 2006 to 7.6 pp in 2011.

### Attendance rate for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Aboriginal students</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
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<td>92.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEC NSW, Office of Education

**Education attainment for Aboriginal students**

In 2011, the number of Aboriginal students completing a Higher School Certificate continued to rise, with a 6.6% increase since 2010.

The number of Aboriginal students completing a Higher School Certificate or Record of Achievement also continued to rise, with a 9.2% increase since 2010.

**Figure 12: Number of Aboriginal students completing HSC/Record of Achievement (2001-2011)**

Source: DEC NSW, Office of Education. Data extracted from Board of Studies (BOS) revised results/participation (January) database.
Our outcomes at school

High expectations, closing the gaps

The number of Aboriginal students eligible for the University Admissions Index/Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (UAI/ATAR) increased in the 2001-2011 period. Some 433 Aboriginal students were eligible for a UAI/ATAR in 2011, up from 232 in 2001.

Despite this numerical increase however, the overall proportion of Aboriginal students eligible for a UAI/ATAR has decreased. In 2001, 48.0% of those completing the HSC were eligible for UAI/ATAR, whereas in 2011 this had decreased to 39.7%.

Figure 13: Number and proportion of Aboriginal HSC students eligible for UAI/ATAR (2001-2011)

Source: DEC NSW, Office of Education. Data extracted from Board of Studies (BOS) revised results/participation (January) database.
Personalised learning plans for students with a disability and Aboriginal students

To date, over 30,000 personalised learning plans (PLPs) for Aboriginal students across the state have been developed and implemented in partnership with parents and caregivers to support Aboriginal student achievement. In NSW, the development and implementation of PLPs was initiated in direct response to Recommendation 28 of the Review of Aboriginal Education. Under the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010-2014, all States and Territories are now required to report against the number of Aboriginal students with a PLP.

In 2011, the Department provided additional support for more than 35,000 school students with a confirmed disability through targeted specialist programs, including more than 15,500 students in regular school classes through the Integration Funding Support Program and more than 19,000 students in support classes in regular and special schools.

Work is progressing around personalised learning and support planning for students with a disability, in order to meet the target of 60% with a PLP by 2020. During 2012, baseline data will be gathered in relation to the number of students with a confirmed disability who have a personalised learning and support plan. Standards and guidelines for personalised learning and support for students with a disability will be developed and implemented through the initiative Every Student, Every School: Learning and Support 2012-2013, which is funded under the National Partnership entitled More Support for Students with Disabilities.

Teachers seeking and gaining accreditation at Accomplished and Leadership levels

Since August 2008, teachers in NSW schools have been able to apply for voluntary accreditation at higher levels. Eight teachers applied for accreditation at Accomplished and Leadership levels in 2008. In 2011, a total 119 teachers applied.

Figure 14: Teachers in NSW seeking accreditation at higher levels

Note: These figures include teachers from all sectors. Slight differences may occur in the data in subsequent years because teachers may withdraw, after commencing but before completing, the accreditation process.

Source: NSW Institute of Teachers (unpublished data)

Since teachers have 3 years to complete their submission for accreditation, there is currently no meaningful data on teachers who have gained accreditation at these levels.
Our outcomes at school

High expectations, closing the gaps

Government commitments and priorities

- Support the raised school leaving age by expanding access to Structured Workplace Learning, providing vocational training while at school to students in Years 9 and 10
- Support the raised school leaving age by providing targeted support for youth at risk of disengagement including mentoring and engagement with Commonwealth funded Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections providers and Independent Employment Advisors who provide real life industry-grounded support for young people
- Increase access to quality retention programs for students in Years 10, 11 and 12 and develop resources to support students to plan their education and training goals for the future
- Expand online resources to support students in Years 10, 11 and 12 to plan and document their education and training goals and identify options for further education and employment
- Provide innovative and tailored learning opportunities, mentoring and targeted case management strategies to assist students facing disadvantage, including regional and rural students, Aboriginal students, students from backgrounds where English is not their first language and students with a disability
- Implement evidence based school and regional plans to improve attendance and retention rates
Strategies to support student retention

In 2011, a total of $2.4 million was allocated to provide support for students in Years 9 and 10 (Stage 5) to undertake VET courses, including those delivered by TAFE. Of the 1,468 (Stage 5) students from government schools enrolled in TAFE-delivered VET courses during 2011, 454 enrolled in an Industry Curriculum Framework Course (ICF) course with a mandatory work placement requirement. Work Placement Service Providers coordinated mandatory work placements across the State.

The Department secured Commonwealth funding under the Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership through timely delivery of the NSW annual report and negotiated reward payments with the Commonwealth.

Funding was also received under National Partnerships for an additional 350 places for students in Years 9 and 10 to undertake externally delivered vocational courses.

The Links to Learning program provided funding of approximately $8 million to non-government organisations and local government authorities to run projects to assist youth at risk of disengaging from their education. In 2011, some 55 organisations supported 3,600 students. Over 1,000 students were supported through the Indigenous Education Agreement (IEA) initiative with 90% staying engaged in school, training or employment. Proposals for the 2012 round of targeted project funding for at risk students were also invited from the school sector and TAFE.

In 2011, 36 secondary teachers completed training to work as transition advisers as part of their schools’ career and transition teams expanded support for the retention of targeted at risk students. Transition advisers use a range of Department developed and external resources to help students re-engage with learning, plan their education and training goals and make a successful transition through and from school. Over 200 teachers have been trained for this role since 2005.

The establishment of Trade Schools and Trade Training Centres in over 200 schools supported student retention and increased access to high quality trades training facilities.

Online resources

In October 2011 an online template, designed to assist students create detailed career and transition plans, was added to the Department’s online Student Pathways Survey resource which is used by over 17,000 students annually. As at December 2011, over 1,500 students had started or completed a personal plan using the new online template.

In 2011, some 35 schools across 9 regions trialled the web-based online career management tool (e-ME), a student resource developed collaboratively with students and teachers. These resources, together with Logbook Online, support students in Years 9 to 12 to plan and document their education and training goals and identify options for further education and employment. The resources can be updated by students at any time.

Strategies to assist students facing disadvantage

In 2011, the Department provided additional support for more than 35,000 school students with a confirmed disability through targeted specialist programs including more than 15,500 students in regular school classes through the Integration Funding Support Program and more than 19,000 students in support classes in regular and special schools.

Strategies to assist students from backgrounds where English is not their first language included expansion of the Refugee Support Strategy to enhance the capacity of schools and the expansion of the Teaching English Language Learners professional learning program for teachers.

The 5th Biennial Equity Conference, Schooling for Futures, supported teachers in providing innovative and tailored learning opportunities for students in the field of disadvantage. The conference was attended by 1,042 participants.

The Priority Schools Program provided an additional 280 teaching positions to the 581 schools in low socioeconomic status (low SES) communities to enhance the ratio of staff to students.
To provide additional support for Aboriginal students, a number of programs and initiatives were implemented, including:

- the Norta Norta Program, which provides tailored learning support to individual Aboriginal students. In 2011, approximately 682 schools provided learning assistance for Aboriginal students in Years 4, 6, 8 and 10 and tutorial assistance was provided for approximately 2,671 Aboriginal students in Years 11 and 12.

- continued implementation of Phase 3 of the Schools in Partnership initiative in 89 schools (69 individual schools and 20 schools in 5 communities of schools) with significant Aboriginal student enrolments.

- funding 27 schools to employ Aboriginal language tutors to assist Aboriginal communities preserve, teach and use their community languages. The funding facilitates the teaching of 11 Aboriginal languages and provides opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students from Kindergarten to Year 10 to learn an Aboriginal language.

Strategies to improve student attendance

An additional 25 home school liaison officer positions and 15 new Aboriginal student liaison officer positions were established in 2010 as part of Keep Them Safe. In 2011, this enabled more proactive regional interventions to support the regular attendance of students at school. Regions report that in addition to case work, home school liaison officers are providing the following support to schools, families and communities:

- professional learning for school staff (consulting with schools to implement a broader range of strategies prior to making applications to the Home School Liaison Program)

- professional learning for teachers and the proactive use of data to assist schools to identify students at risk of developing poor attendance patterns.

- working with school learning support teams to implement attendance improvement strategies (for example telephone intervention programs and referral to appropriate agencies).

- local area initiatives focusing on anti-truancy, for example working with local police and chambers of commerce to display advice to students that they will not be served in shops during school hours without a leave pass from the school.

- focusing support on schools with below average attendance rates to develop comprehensive attendance action plans.
Our outcomes at school

Quality teaching and leadership

Government commitments and priorities

- Recruit and retain the highest quality graduates and skilled staff in all locations
- Ensure rigorous preparation and development of teachers and leaders
- Implement effective systems to recognise and reward quality teaching that improves achievement
- Implement the Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan
- Provide comprehensive, evidence-based literacy and numeracy support that enables teachers to more effectively program, teach and assess students’ individuals needs across all stages of learning
- Expand and enhance professional learning programs for teachers on how to improve student literacy and numeracy achievement
- Supporting Students Plan: Trial 50 new Student Support Officers commencing with the 2012 school year in schools with need of additional student support. Conduct an independent review of the Student Support Officers in Term 4, 2013 to assess possible wider roll out
- Increased incentives to attract experienced teachers to hard to staff schools
- Support teacher quality initiatives that demonstrate, develop and share high quality teaching and lead to improved outcomes for students
- Increase the number of Highly Accomplished Teachers in NSW public schools, a role which recognises high quality teaching and supports and encourages other experienced teachers to seek accreditation at higher levels
- Participate in pilot programs with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to develop appropriate transition support for schools relating to the implementation of the National Professional Standards for Teachers and Principals
Teacher recruitment

In 2011, 8,445 applicants, including 4,884 final year teacher education students, were approved to teach in NSW public schools.

During the 2010-2011 staffing operation (from Term 2, 2010 until the end of Term 1, 2011) 4,540 classroom teacher positions were filled, 60% through a method chosen by the school, an increase of 6 percentage points since the previous staffing operation.

As at 19 December 2011, 1,040 teachers, including 152 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander teachers, had been appointed since the introduction of the Teacher Education Scholarship program in 2002, to attract teachers to areas of identified workforce need and to increase the number of Aboriginal teachers. In 2011, 297 applicants, including 75 Aboriginal students, were offered a scholarship in the 2012 scholarship program.

In 2011, there were 10 mathematics, 13 science (physics) and 9 special education teachers appointed after undertaking the Incentive Scholarship program. The program was introduced in 2008 to attract high quality graduates in their final year of study and not in receipt of any other type of scholarship.

In addition, 538 teachers completed retraining programs in mathematics, science (physics), engineering studies, school counselling, special education, careers advice, teacher librarianship, Reading Recovery and English as a second language in 2011.

The Beginning Teachers Support Initiative provided funding equivalent to 1 hour per week relief to 3,048 ‘permanent on probation’ beginning teachers in 1,162 public schools during 2011. The 2011-2012 Teacher Mentor Program provided 50 full-time equivalent mentors, appointed to support beginning teachers in 92 schools across NSW.

The Department continued to work closely with the NSWIT, to ensure compliance with the accreditation requirements for New Scheme Teachers at ‘professional competence’, and voluntary accreditation at ‘professional accomplishment’ and ‘professional leadership’. As at December 2011, 6,800 permanent public school teachers had been accredited at ‘professional competence’ through NSWIT.

Applicants for Highly Accomplished Teacher (HAT) positions are required to complete a successful preliminary assessment at one of the voluntary accreditation levels with the NSWIT. Teachers appointed to HAT positions are required to submit their application for accreditation by the end of their 2 year appointment. The first group, appointed at the commencement of the 2010 school year, were required to submit applications for accreditation by the end of December 2011.

Professional development and literacy and numeracy support

All teachers and school leaders in NSW government schools have access to a comprehensive range of professional learning courses and programs aligned to roles and key accountabilities. Professional learning programs are aligned to key standards and research frameworks including the NSW Department of Education and Communities Quality Teaching model, Professional Teaching Standards, School Leadership Capability Framework, Leading and Managing the School, and the National Professional Standards for Principals.

As part of the strong focus on strengthening the capacity of teachers and school leaders, professional learning program provision has been expanded through the implementation of online programs and centrally developed professional learning programs for local implementation.
In 2011, the Public Schools NSW Portfolio:

- continued to strengthen the capacity of newly appointed teachers and school leaders by developing and delivering newly appointed teacher and school leader induction programs and online programs to enable equitable access to professional learning
- further developed the online professional learning programs, Classroom Teacher and Leadership Learning. These programs were designed for teachers and school leaders to achieve and maintain accreditation with the NSWIT
- developed and implemented an enhanced School Measurement, Assessment and Reporting Toolkit (SMART 2) for schools to support more effective programming, teaching and assessment of students’ individual needs across all stages of learning. SMART provides teachers with a bank of high quality teaching strategies which connect the assessment analysis to the skills assessed in NAPLAN tests and the NSW syllabuses
- developed and delivered 650 departmental-NSWIT registered programs, including 3,386 state wide registered professional learning sessions, covering all elements of the Professional Teaching Standards. MyPL@Edu, the Department’s professional learning management system, managed over 10,000 professional learning events with over 197,837 professional learning registrations
- implemented a comprehensive suite of leadership learning programs aligned to the roles and key accountabilities of school leaders. These programs include Implementing the Assessment and Review Schedules in Your School, Understanding Performance Management, and Skills for Performance Management
- developed and delivered the Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12 program as a key state wide strategy to support school teams to improve student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy
- further developed the Literacy Continuum and the Numeracy Continuum for Kindergarten to Year 10 teachers to guide programming, teaching and assessment practices
- provided a variety of intervention numeracy programs, including Targeted Early Numeracy (TEN), Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) and Count Me In Too, to support the effective teaching of numeracy K-10
- provided a variety of intervention literacy programs, including Language, Learning and Literacy (L3), Reading Recovery, Focus on Reading and Literacy Lessons to support teachers in improving student literacy outcomes
- provided 106 full-time equivalent teaching positions for expert Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers to deliver quality literacy and numeracy teaching and learning programs in the early years of schooling.

Supporting Students Plan

To implement this election commitment, 10 new student support officer positions were trialled, with appointments made in 10 schools during Term 3, 2011. Officers were provided with a formal, 5 day induction.

Recruitment action commenced late in 2011 for the next 20 positions to be appointed in January 2012.

The new student support officers are providing support to secondary students through evidence-based anti-bullying and student wellbeing strategies, working with individual and small groups of students to develop effective coping skills and positive relationships at school and at home. They are also connecting students and their families with other staff, services, community activities and support agencies.

Student support officers assist with the implementation of digital citizenship programs with particular reference to cyberbullying and social networking initiatives. They also liaise with partner primary schools to support effective transition of students through to secondary schools.
Increased incentives

A proposal has been developed with details on options for consideration in a potential package of incentives for schools which attract 4 transfer points but do not currently attract incentive benefits. Its implementation will be subject to Treasury providing additional funding.

Teacher quality initiatives

Under the Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership, 22 schools commenced operation as Centres for Excellence in 2011, joining the first tranche of 13 schools which completed in 2010. The Department therefore achieved the target of 35 government schools Centres for Excellence, contributing to the cross-sectoral target of 50 such schools across NSW. The 35 government Centres for Excellence, located across all regions, support over 150 schools through initiatives which promote and demonstrate quality teaching.

The Department identified an additional group of schools to participate in a year-long teacher quality project, focusing on areas such as professional development aligned to teaching standards and support for early career teachers and initial teacher education students.

Highly Accomplished Teachers (HATs)

During 2011, an additional 22 HATs were appointed in Centres for Excellence, 15 in schools participating in the Low SES School Communities National Partnership and 47 in ‘Reform Extension Initiative’ schools (ie, schools participating in NP reforms, in a 2 year program to boost literacy and numeracy results). Together with those who commenced in 2010, the total number of HATs in government schools in 2011 was 108.

HATs support experienced colleagues seeking voluntary accreditation at either ‘professional accomplishment’ or ‘professional leadership’. In 2010-2011, some 41 NSW public school teachers sought accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers at ‘professional accomplishment’ and 49 sought accreditation at ‘professional leadership’. This represented an increase from the previous year of around 10% and 14% respectively. In addition, 373 teachers made preliminary applications for accreditation at the higher levels, an increase of almost 15% from the previous year.

By the end of 2011, 8 HATs from the first tranche of Centres for Excellence had completed submissions for accreditation at ‘professional accomplishment’ or ‘professional leadership’.

Pilot program with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

As part of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) research trialling the national professional standards for teachers, the Department implemented a pilot study focusing on career stages of ‘highly accomplished’ and ‘lead’ in the NSW context. The study involved consultation with principal and expert teacher stakeholder groups and engagement with over 700 principals, teachers and non-school based teaching staff in an online survey. The report, Recognising, Building and Ensuring Teacher Quality, was submitted to AITSL for review in December 2011.
Our outcomes at school

New and better ways of doing business - Local Schools, Local Decisions Action Plan

Government commitments and priorities

- Establish a NSW Public School Upgrade Fund
- Boost funding available for basic maintenance and allow principals to control their budgets and hire local tradespeople for minor maintenance
- Give principals control for minor purchases, and retain local school bank accounts to facilitate such purchases
- Create a General Assistant (GA) Training Fund and allow principals to control their GA budgets
- Complete an independent public review of the Devolution of School Funding Pilot
- Consider making school times more flexible and making school facilities available for non-school activities out of hours
- Conduct a consultation process to inform the implementation framework for increasing local decision making in public schools
- Progressively implement actions to increase local decision making in public schools
- Provide principals and their staff with improved information systems and tools to assist with decision making about resources, staff, school maintenance and purchasing
Our outcomes at school

New and better ways of doing business - Local Schools, Local Decisions Action Plan

Implementation framework for Local Schools, Local Decisions

In August 2011, following the announcement by the Minister for Education, consultation commenced on the implementation of Local Schools, Local Decisions reforms. These reforms aim to increase local authority in a range of areas, including minor purchases. The consultation process involved principals, teachers, other staff, students and parents, and included discussion on purchasing in schools.

The consultation included 444 face-to-face forums, attended by 6,039 participants, as well as 4,042 written submissions and an open online forum. This was the first time that the Department had engaged in a public online forum about major reforms.

Input from this consultation process has informed the development of next steps to be considered by the NSW Government in early 2012. The Learning Management and Business Reform Program has also been refocused to deliver solutions that better meet school needs, including the way that they manage their funds.

The National Partnership Empowering Local Schools will complement increased local decision making in schools.

Devolution of the school funding pilot

In August 2011, the Minister for Education announced that ARTD Consultants had won a public tender process to conduct an independent public review of the Department’s School Based Management Pilot in 47 schools. A reference group was responsible for liaison with the consultants and ensuring that the terms of reference were met.

On 3 November 2011 the final report, Independent Review of the School Based Management Pilot, was released to the public. It was very positive about the efforts of principals and school communities to use the additional flexibility to meet the needs of their students. There were 10 key conclusions and 8 recommendations. The full report and the summary document are available on the Department’s internet site.

Public school upgrades and maintenance

The 2011-2012 State Budget provided $10 million for Round 1 of the $40 million Public School Upgrade Fund to enable schools to renovate facilities in poor condition as identified by the principal and school community. Schools are able to apply for funding for projects up to a maximum amount of $200,000.

Applications for Round 1 were received between October and November 2011. Some 3,169 applications were received from 1,271 schools, with a total estimated project cost of $201.4 million. Funding was provided under Round 1 for 143 projects in 130 schools. Of these schools, 39 have elected to self-manage their projects.

The 2011-2012 State Budget also provided a $20 million increase in the minor maintenance budget for schools. This funding will be provided over 2 years with $5 million available in 2011-2012. Over the 2 years, all government schools will receive an allocation based on a standard amount of $1,000 plus a proportional distribution based on student enrolments, floor space and maintenance liability. School principals, in consultation with their school community, determine the projects to be undertaken and select the providers who offer best value for money to carry out the work. In the 2011-2012 financial year, funding was provided to 697 schools.

General Assistant training and budgets

In 2011, the Government allocated $2.4 million to provide schools with funds for training and skill development of general assistants. Funding is being progressively provided to all NSW public schools over 2 financial years:

- $0.6 million was allocated in the 2011-12 State Budget to commence this initiative
- 697 schools are to receive the funding in the 2011-2012 financial year
- the remaining schools are scheduled for funding in the 2012-2013 financial year.
Training needs are to be identified by principals, in consultation with general assistants, after considering the general assistant’s current skill base and the skills required to perform the role in the school.

Regions, in consultation with schools, choose the most appropriate training content and delivery modes from a range of options to suit the needs of schools and individual general assistants.

Depending upon the identified training needs, schools can select from a range of options for the training, including a customised training course for general assistants, the TAFE Certificate I in General Construction, a range of other courses conducted by TAFE or by registered training organisations, or training conducted by local tradespersons.

Operational hours and community use of school facilities

Work has been undertaken on school operational hours and community use. The process has included a detailed survey of principals from 3 regions, the collation of comments from other stakeholders and a review of literature. This has resulted in 2 snapshot reports and other papers that indicate a diversity of operational times and extensive community use are both possible and already common. The findings can better support schools considering their operational times and guide any future review of the community use of school facilities policy and procedures.

Improved information systems

The Learning Management and Business Reform (LMBR) program completed Stage 1 delivery in December 2011. Stage 1 of the program has delivered a new finance solution into State offices and TAFE NSW institutes, and has involved the development of the new HR/payroll solution for TAFE NSW. It has also added enhancements to the new finance solution and conducted additional training, for both State office and TAFE NSW, to better meet user needs.

In 2011, the LMBR program conducted a comprehensive replanning exercise for Stage 2 with key Department of Education and Communities stakeholders to align the program to future Department needs.

Concurrent with the delivery of Stage 1, the Department engaged a transformation services provider to provide expertise in delivery of Stage 2 benefits to be achieved through industry leading services, implemented across TAFE, schools and corporate. The deployment will lead to increased performance and outcomes across 5 value areas:

- student and customer focused
- employee engagement
- informed decision making
- service excellence
- transparency and accountability.
Our outcomes in tertiary education
High expectations, closing the gaps

NSW 2021 targets

- Increase by 50% the proportion of Australians aged 20 to 64 with qualifications at Certificate III and above by 2020
- Increase by 20% the number of completions in higher level VET qualifications at AQF III and above by women, by 2020
- Increase by 20% the number of completions in higher level VET qualifications at AQF III and above by students in rural and regional NSW by 2020
- Increase by 20% the number of completions in higher level VET qualifications at AQF III and above by Aboriginal students by 2020
- Increase by 100% the number of completions in higher level qualifications at Diploma and above by 2020
- Increase to 20% the proportion of undergraduate enrolments by students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds by 2020
- Increase to 44% the proportion of 25-34 year-olds who hold a bachelor level qualification or above by 2025
- Increase to 90% the proportion of young people who have left school and are participating in further education and/or training or employment by 2020
- Increase by 10% the number of apprenticeship and traineeship completions by 2016, including in rural and regional NSW
It is critical that NSW has an educated and skilled workforce to drive a productive and growing economy. More than ever, it is important we find ways to work collaboratively across government, industry and tertiary sectors to develop a skill base that meets the current and future needs of NSW businesses. The delivery of high quality, accessible and relevant training will support workforce participation and the growth of industry and business.

Projections for these targets are consistent with COAG targets and are based on an indicative straight line projection from the 2010 baselines.

**Increase by 50% the proportion of Australians aged 20 to 64 with qualifications at Certificate III and above by 2020**

In 2011, 57% of people in NSW aged 20-64 years had attained qualifications at AQF Certificate III and above. This was an increase of 1.2 percentage points since 2010 based on Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Education and Work.

**Figure 15: NSW persons (20-64 years old) with a qualification at AQF Certificate III level or above, 2005-2011 actuals**

The shaded area in the graph represents the confidence intervals or error associated with each annual estimate. The error bars highlight the extent to which the data can fluctuate from year to year without the apparent changes being statistically significant. A change over time is only likely to be statistically significant if the error bars associated with the comparison years do not overlap.

Source: Actuals based on ABS Education and Work, Australia, Cat. 6227 at May each year (Additional datacubes)

**Increase by 100% the number of completions in higher level qualifications at Diploma and above by 2020**

- In 2009 there were 16,022 completions in higher level VET qualifications at Diploma level and above.
- This was an increase of over 3,000 completions since 2005 based the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research VET Provider Collection.

**Figure 16: NSW number of completions at Diploma qualification and above, 2005-2009 actuals**

Source: NCVER admin data, 2011
Note: 2009 qualification numbers are preliminary due to lag in reporting

**Increase by 20% the number of completions in higher level VET qualifications at AQF III and above by women, by 2020**

- In 2009 there were 51,860 qualification completions by women (all ages) at AQF Certificate level III and above.
- This was an increase of over 9,600 completions since 2005 based the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research VET Provider Collection.
Our outcomes in tertiary education
High expectations, closing the gaps

Increase by 20% the number of completions in higher level VET qualifications at AQF III and above by Aboriginal students by 2020
- In 2009 there were 2,300 qualification completions by Aboriginal students (all ages) at AQF Certificate level III and above.
- This was an increase of over 680 completions since 2005 based the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research VET Provider Collection.

Figure 18: NSW rural and regional students - number of completions at Certificate level AQF III qualification and above, 2005-2009 actuals

Note: 2009 qualification numbers are preliminary due to lag in reporting
Source: NCVER VET provider collection, Powerplay cubes

Increase by 20% the number of completions in higher level VET qualifications at AQF III and above by students in rural and regional NSW by 2020
- In 2009 there were 31,606 qualification completions by rural and regional students (all ages) at AQF Certificate level III and above.
- This was an increase of over 6,200 completions since 2005 based the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research VET Provider Collection.

Figure 17: women in NSW - number of completions at Certificate level AQF III qualification and above, 2005-2009 actuals

Note: 2009 qualification numbers are preliminary due to lag in reporting
Source: NCVER VET provider collection, Powerplay cubes

Figure 19: NSW Aboriginal students - number of completions at Certificate level AQF III qualification and above, 2005-2009 actuals

Note: 2009 qualification numbers are preliminary due to lag in reporting
Source: NCVER VET provider collection, Powerplay cubes
Increase to 44% the proportion of 25-34 year-olds who hold a bachelor level qualification or above by 2025

- In 2011, 37.3% of people aged 25-34 years had attained a bachelor level qualification or above. This was an increase of 5.6 percentage points on 2006 based on Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Education and Work.
- Care needs to be taken with the interpretation of these ABS survey data as high standard errors can mean that differences from year to year are not significant.

**Figure 20: Proportion of 25-34 year olds in NSW holding a bachelor level qualification or above**

Note: 2007 and 2008 figures unavailable
Source - ABS Survey of Education and Work data - released annually in May

Increase to 20% the proportion of undergraduate enrolments by students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds by 2020

- In 2010, 17.2% of undergraduate enrolments in NSW were for students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds. This is a slight increase on the rate for 2008 (16.7%), based on higher education student statistics (DEEWR).

**Figure 21: Proportion of low socioeconomic status background undergraduate students enrolled at NSW higher education providers**

- We have set tertiary qualification targets that will make sure NSW has the most highly skilled workforce in the country. We want to make sure all members of our community have access to high quality training so they can fully participate in the workforce. Actions to achieve these targets include:
  - work with key industry sectors to identify skills shortages, develop specialised training programs and prioritise the delivery of training to support high growth industries and occupations with strong job prospects
  - provide personalised learning solutions, flexible training options, career counselling, and language, literacy and numeracy support to help people achieve higher level qualifications
  - develop customised programs for Aboriginal students, including leadership courses, family education courses, and courses in entrepreneurial and small business skills, which will help build community capacity and enhance employment outcomes
  - develop effective pathways into higher education by working with businesses, schools, vocational education and training and higher education providers
Our outcomes in tertiary education
High expectations, closing the gaps

- establish more effective consultative mechanisms with the Commonwealth, industry and the tertiary sector to improve skills and qualification levels across the NSW workforce
- provide training options for retrenched workers in regional and rural areas
- provide targeted training in areas of employment growth for students in regional and rural areas, Aboriginal people and women
- increase university enrolments and attainment through improved links between schools, vocational education providers and universities, especially those serving low socioeconomic communities and regional NSW.

Increase to 90% the proportion of young people who have left school and are participating in further education and/or training or employment by 2020
- In 2011, 68.6% of 15-19 year olds who had left school were participating in further education and training and/or employment.
- This was a decrease of 1.9 percentage points since 2008 based on the ABS Survey of Education and Work. Care needs to be taken with the interpretation of these ABS survey data as high standard errors can mean that differences from year to year are not significant.

Increase by 10% the number of apprenticeship and traineeship completions by 2016, including in rural and regional NSW
- In 2010, 50,147 apprenticeships and traineeships were completed, an increase of 11,906 completions since 2006.
- In rural and regional NSW, 19,552 apprenticeships and traineeships were completed compared to 16,083 in 2006 (an increase of 3,469 completions).
- These figures are sourced from the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research Apprenticeship and Traineeship collection as at September each year.

Note: The shaded area in the graph represents the confidence intervals or error associated with each annual estimate. The error bars highlight the extent to which the data can fluctuate from year to year without the apparent changes being statistically significant. A change over time is only likely to be statistically significant if the error bars associated with the comparison years do not overlap.

Source: ABS data derived from ABS Survey on Education and Work, 2011
We want young people in NSW to make a successful transition from school to further education, training and employment. Actions to achieve these targets include:

- increase the number of apprenticeships completed through competency-based assessment, shorter term apprenticeships and credits towards an apprenticeship or traineeship where lower level vocational training has already been completed
- work with industry to review the current length of apprenticeships and reduce terms where appropriate
- support the raised school leaving age by:
  - expanding access to Structured Workplace Learning providing vocational training while at school to students in Years 9 and 10
  - providing targeted support for youth at risk of disengagement including mentoring and engagement with Commonwealth-funded Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections providers and Independent Employment Advisers who provide real life industry-grounded support for young people
- fund pre-apprenticeship and pre-traineeship training to help young people begin and complete higher-level training and secure skilled job opportunities.
Our outcomes in tertiary education

High expectations, closing the gaps

Government commitments and priorities

- Provide personalised learning solutions, flexible training options, career counselling, and language, literacy and numeracy support to help people achieve higher level qualifications
- Develop customised programs for Aboriginal people, including leadership courses, family education courses, and courses in entrepreneurial and small business skills, which will help build community capacity and enhance employment outcomes
- Provide training options for retrenched workers in regional and rural areas
- Provide targeted training in areas of employment growth for students in regional and rural areas, Aboriginal people and women
- Increase the number of apprenticeships completed through competency-based assessment, shorter term apprenticeships and credits towards an apprenticeship or traineeship where lower level vocational training has already been completed
- Fund pre-apprenticeship and pre-traineeship training to support young people begin and complete higher-level training and secure skilled job opportunities
- Work with industry to review the current length of apprenticeships and reduce terms where appropriate
- TAFE NSW will improve a range of strategies, including pathways to higher level qualifications, flexible training options, support services, career counselling and personalised learning solutions for the working age population across NSW
Strategies to help people achieve higher level qualifications

TAFE NSW is continuously expanding and improving a range of strategies to meet the needs of the working age population across NSW, including pathways to higher level qualifications, flexible training options, support services, career counselling and personalised learning solutions. In 2011, TAFE NSW:

- launched the TAFE NSW Adobe Connect Pro Web Conferencing production environment, enabling teachers and students to use the latest in web conferencing technology, with a total of 11,088 sessions and 46,320 users from July to December
- worked in partnership with Juvenile Justice and Department of Attorney General and Justice to deliver Certificate IV in Youth Justice Future to existing employees, both metropolitan and regional, through flexible online delivery and assessment (TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute)
- expanded the innovative industry retention and leadership development program, Appetite for Success, originally designed for chefs, to deliver qualifications up to Diploma level to front-of-house food and beverage hospitality staff using mentoring and workplace delivery and assessment (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute)
- implemented Personalised Learning and Employment Support teams at all campuses to ensure students are appropriately placed in courses, and to assist in successful completion (TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute)
- continued to expand the range of learning options available through innovative use of technologies, including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, MOODLE, Wikispaces and Adobe Connect (TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute).

State Training Services consulted with individual businesses and the industry sector to identify skill needs and assist with the brokering of training solutions to address priority workforce development requirements.

In 2011, the NSW Productivity Places Program supported the delivery of full qualifications for 11,561 jobseekers and 9,070 existing workers at a cost of $63.6 million.

The program funds growth in entry-level traineeships at Certificate II and III level as jobseeker places, as well as qualifications at the Certificate IV and Diploma level. For existing workers, the program funds existing worker qualifications at Certificate III to Advanced Diploma.

Some 10,161 people were supported through the Strategic Skills Program which purchases training in part qualifications to address existing and emerging skill needs and shortages in NSW. The program contributes to specific government, industry and community strategies, both economic and social, where skills development plays an integral role. The training is designed to help people get jobs or higher skilled jobs and targets jobseekers and existing workers.

Through the program, $1.6 million was allocated for language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) support for 900 students needing to improve their basic skills. Training organisations are also encouraged to customise programs to provide flexible training options in order to meet the training needs of individuals and employers.

Customised programs to enhance Aboriginal employment outcomes

TAFE NSW develops customised programs for Aboriginal people, including leadership courses, family education courses, and courses in entrepreneurial and small business skills, which will help build community capacity and enhance employment outcomes. In 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- expanded the state wide Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program in conjunction with the NSW Police Force to assist Aboriginal people to gain entry to the NSW Police Academy (managed by TAFE NSW - Western Institute)
- developed and delivered Indigenous driver training programs in collaboration with Joblink Plus and the region’s Aboriginal Land Councils (TAFE NSW - New England Institute)
- supported regional and metropolitan Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Case Workers employed by the Department of Human Services NSW to gain the Diploma of Community Services (Case Management) through recognition, skills gap training, and workplace mentoring (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute)
Our outcomes in tertiary education

High expectations, closing the gaps

Training options for retrenched workers in regional and rural areas

The Retrenched Workers Assistance Program is managed by State Training Services and supports retrenched workers by providing assessments of workers’ existing skills, identification of local employment opportunities and targeted training to assist them undertake employment opportunities in new trade areas.

In 2011, over $1 million was spent on assisting 1,100 affected workers from 24 companies. Of these, over 237 received or are in the process of receiving training and 344 people were able to secure employment.

The program was able to provide immediate assistance and support to over 800 workers affected by the BlueScope Steel downsizing in the Illawarra region.

In 2012 and 2013, the program will be 1 of 3 elements of the Regional Training and Employment Strategy 2011-2013, a 2 year program targeting jobseekers and school leavers.

Targeted training for students in regional and rural areas, Aboriginal people and women

In 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- delivered, in partnership with Roads and Maritime Services, Habitat Personnel and the Master Builders Association (as a group employer), courses in Civil Construction to Aboriginal students at Bega and Moruya so that they could be employed by private contractors carrying out major road works for the Roads and Maritime Services (TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute)

- established a strategic alliance with CPA Australia, Innovation Business Skills Australia and 4 universities, to develop the Tertiary Pathway to Accounting Program to meet the demand for accountants in rural and regional areas. Students complete an Associate Degree of Accounting at TAFE NSW in the first 2 years and then progress to the third year of a university Bachelor degree program (TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute)
implemented on-the-job training in conservation and management combined with literacy training for Indigenous workers employed by State Water on the Koondrook-Perricoota Forest Flood Enhancement Works project (TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute)

delivered 3 courses specifically designed for women: Digital Graphics, Technical Skills for Home and Business for Women from Language Backgrounds other than English, and Selling and Buying Online (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute)

commissioned a fleet of new mobile delivery units, introduced a range of new online training programs and launched TAFE Western Connect to provide more training options to students in western regional and rural NSW using online delivery, mobile learning units and connected classrooms (TAFE NSW - Western Institute).

Both the Productivity Places Program and the Strategic Skills Program, managed by State Training Services, are committed to providing training in areas of employment growth to priority groups. In 2011, these 2 programs committed at total of $104 million to provide training for Aboriginal people, students in rural and regional NSW and women.

### Apprenticeships

In 2011, 35% of apprentices and trainees completed more than 6 months early. A number of industry sectors including building and construction, manufacturing, food processing, textile, clothing and footwear and printing and graphic arts have all implemented competency based progression for apprentices and trainees. State Training Services is continuing to increase the introduction of competency based progression in other industry sectors.

The Board of Vocational Education and Training launched a report on apprenticeships – A fair deal. A key element of the report is genuine competency based pay and progression, based on skills and work performance and recognition for the apprentice’s achievements and contributions, rather than an artificial time construct. State Training Services is working on implementing the report’s recommendations.

State Training Services is working with other States and Territories to reform the apprenticeship system with a key focus on reducing apprenticeship terms for apprentices who hold the relevant trade qualification but need more work experience or for apprentices who have completed a relevant lower level qualification or traineeship or pre-vocational or pre-apprenticeship course.

Reduced term apprenticeships have been established in industries including food processing, hairdressing, marine engineering, beauty therapy, stonemasonry, construction carpentry, signage, joinery, roof tiling and horticulture.

Part-time apprenticeships have been successfully introduced in the hairdressing industry. Ongoing discussions are occurring with other industries to introduce similar arrangements.

At the end of 2011, the NSW and Victorian Premiers signed an agreement to lead reform in the promotion of apprenticeships and interstate transfer of training contracts to improve apprentice mobility. One of the first actions is to improve the take up by industry of competency based progression for apprentices.

### Pre-apprenticeship and pre-traineeship training

Under the Kickstart Pre-apprenticeship Training Program, there were 892 commencements in priority trade areas. Approximately 74 courses were delivered by registered training providers and TAFE NSW in New England, North Coast, Hunter, Central Coast, Illawarra and Western Sydney areas. Language, literacy and numeracy training and support were also offered in most courses. Approximately 60% or 440 participants achieved a training or employment outcome in 2011.
Our outcomes in tertiary education

High expectations, closing the gaps

TAFE NSW provided pre-apprenticeship and pre-traineeship training to support young people begin and complete higher-level training and secure skilled job opportunities. In 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- delivered a series of KickStart pre-apprenticeship programs in conjunction with State Training Services, Woolworths and Castle Personnel, to provide local youth with introductory butchery skills and credit towards the first year of a full apprenticeship (TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute)

- delivered pre-apprenticeship courses in automotive, metal fabrication and welding, fitting and machining, electrotechnology, carpentry, bricklaying, hairdressing and commercial cookery (TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute)

- delivered a number of pre-apprenticeship automotive programs in partnership with Autostart Pty Ltd (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute)

- delivered pre-apprenticeship training in building and construction at the Macarthur Building Industry Skills Centre with students engaged in the construction of a 4 bedroom cottages for Housing NSW (TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney)

- The NSW Government partnered with registered group training organisations and registered training organisations to develop and implement the Group Training Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program. The aim of this program is to place participants who successfully complete their training in apprenticeships. Phase 1 of the program resulted in 340 securing an apprenticeship.

Funding of $3.2 million has been committed for a further 94 pre-apprenticeship training courses targeting over 1,260 participants into priority trades,
Our outcomes in tertiary education

Quality teaching and leadership

Government commitments and priorities

- Recruit and retain the highest quality staff in all locations
- Ensure rigorous preparation and development of teachers and leaders
- Implement strategies to improve the quality of VET training
Our outcomes in tertiary education

Quality teaching and leadership

Recruitment and retention of high quality staff

In 2011, TAFE NSW:

- facilitated a recognition gap analysis and training process for 20 teachers in TAFE NSW Institutes for 2 new Diploma level training and education training package qualifications using both virtual and face-to-face meetings. These resulted in a state wide Community of Practice to support learning and assessment for new qualifications.
- implemented a recognition process for Institute floristry teachers resulting in 16 teachers being deemed competent to teach the new Diploma qualification.
- provided targeted advice to Institutes for recruitment against teaching designations and entry requirements for regulated sectors, ensuring compliance with national industry standards (for example, Nursing).
- ensured all teaching staff had the opportunity to update their qualifications to TAE10 - Training and Education Training Package, by RPL and/or gap training. Provision was also made for teachers to demonstrate equivalence as required, to comply with the national standards.

Preparation and development of teachers and leaders

TAFE NSW Institutes implemented a range of strategies to maintain quality teaching and leadership. In 2011, they:

- delivered training to staff working with humanitarian refugees, including cultural awareness and awareness of the effects of trauma and torture on students (TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute).
- implemented a flexible eLearning strategy to ensure staff are prepared for opportunities to increase flexible delivery and use emerging technologies (TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute).
- implemented the Developing TAFE Staff Capability Initiative, which focuses on 10 key capabilities, the highest priority being Developing Great Teachers (TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute).
- conducted 394 professional development activities with 2,974 attendees and 60 externally organised activities covering coaching, mentoring, frontline management, marketing and sales, customer service and team management, and systems training (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute).
- implemented a 2 year development program for new teachers in conjunction with their line managers (TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute).
- launched the Acumen Leadership Development Program, which included skills in business development, competitive analysis and building business relationships. Ninety-five leaders attended the program and improved their understanding of promoting and supporting commercial business practices as well as accessing business data (TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute).
- funded 13 projects through the Bright Ideas Initiatives which included workshops to build capacity in the areas of project management, methodologies, team leadership and innovation (TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute).
- increased compliance of assessment validation processes through utilising best practice processes and tools to deliver training programs, and identifying specialised staff to provide guidance throughout the organisation (TAFE NSW - Western Institute).
- selected 8 children’s services teachers to commence Masters and PhD programs in partnership with the University of Western Sydney, in preparation for delivering the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and Care (Birth-5) in 2012 (TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute).

In addition, TAFE NSW:

- supported staff capability in eLearning through the establishment of the TAFE eCommunities website and Sustainability Hub.
- aided teachers in developing skills in technology-based learning and assessment techniques through delivery of 24 TAFE Connect online sessions to 1,847 staff across TAFE NSW Institutes.
conducted a range of teacher workshops to:

- engage learners facing barriers through Access Employment Education and Training (AEET) Framework consultations
- implement new and revised training packages
- improve responses to mental health issues through train the trainer sessions
- maintain currency regarding animal care and welfare
- improve student outcomes and course completions in automotive courses
- build capability for TAFE NSW and Corrective Services staff through Pathways to Employment Education and Training (PEET) train the trainer workshops

revised the TAFE NSW Building Our Future: Leadership Program for senior managers and ensured alignment of TAFE NSW workforce capability development activities to the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework.

TAFE NSW - New England Institute received recognition for excellence in supporting students, employers and the region’s communities through achievement of the 2011 award for NSW Large Training Provider of the Year.

Improving the quality of VET training

Through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), all States and Territories have agreed to reform in the vocational education and training sector. In the first phase of State reform the discussion paper, Smart and Skilled: making NSW number 1, was launched for feedback and comment across NSW. Over 600 people attended community consultations and 105 submissions were received. Feedback from the consultations has informed the development of the next stage of reform measures for completion in the first half of 2012.

The Regional Training and Employment Strategy 2011-13 was developed and implemented during the year to help close the regional/urban employment divide. The strategy incorporates 3 programs that have been highly successful in the past in securing training and employment outcomes for 3 groups of jobseekers – people who wish to re-enter the workforce, retrenched workers or those at risk of losing their job, and school leavers.

The Board of Vocational Education and Training report, A fair deal, made a number of conclusions on improving recruitment, retention and qualifications of apprentices. State Training Services will be developing and implementing strategies to address these issues.

In October 2011, a new innovative model to provide pre-apprenticeship training was implemented with registered group training organisations and registered training organisations. The program aims to assist 1,000 individuals gain an apprenticeship by June 2012. Phase 1 of the program achieved 340 apprenticeship outcomes. A further 94 pre-apprenticeship training courses targeting over 1,260 participants into priority trades have been committed in Phase 2.

State Training Services implemented an action plan to meet COAG national quality framework requirements for all workers in the early childhood education and care sector to have a Certificate III or Diploma qualification by 2014. The action plan, which was developed in consultation with industry bodies and launched in December 2011, will provide training for over 10,000 workers to meet the qualification requirements.

The Department is overseeing the development of 3 landmark pathway degrees, linking TAFE Institutes with universities. These initiatives, which are funded by the Board of Vocational Education and Training, aim to establish easily replicable models that will support increased transition of students from vocational education to higher education.

Industry Programs has conducted professional development workshops to ensure that all registered training organisations contracted to deliver training under the Department’s Approved Providers List 2011-2012 meet all the contract requirements. Since July 2011 over 520 registered training organisations have attended 29 workshops. Another 8 workshops have been scheduled to take place in 2012.

State Training Services supported improved access to training by providing high quality information, advice and referral services to business, students and the community through its regional network of service centres, by phone on its state wide “13” number and through its website.
Our outcomes in tertiary education

Quality teaching and leadership

As a result of consultation with industry, advisory bodies and major stakeholders on appropriate qualifications for apprenticeships and traineeships, State Training Services has created 305 new or revised apprenticeship/traineeship pathways.

State Training Services continued to work with key stakeholders across industries in NSW to identify and develop strategies to address skills shortage areas, skill sets, priority training requirements, apprenticeships and traineeship career pathways, and industry projects and initiatives.

In 2011, TAFE NSW also implemented a range of strategies to improve the quality of VET training:

- providing access to 446 training package qualifications, 246 skill sets/statements of attainment and 42 accredited courses on the NSW Course Information System, meeting time based targets to satisfy Institute requirements
- developing the leading edge Information and Communication Technology Training Package (ICA11) on behalf of Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA)
- developing the Sustainable Practice Skill Set delivered at 28 TAFE NSW sites
- supporting TAFE NSW Institutes regarding compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).
Our outcomes in tertiary education

New and better ways of doing business

Government commitments and priorities

- Work with key industry sectors to identify skills shortages, develop specialised training programs and prioritise the delivery of training to support high growth industries and occupations with strong job prospects
- Establish more effective consultative mechanisms with the Commonwealth, industry and the tertiary sector to improve skills and qualification levels across the NSW workforce
- Work with the Commonwealth, States and Territories to progress the harmonisation of apprenticeship administration
- Work with the Commonwealth, to improve the delivery of Australian Apprenticeship Support Services
- Increase university enrolments and attainment through improved links between schools, vocational education providers and universities, especially those serving low socioeconomic communities and regional NSW
- Work with industry to review the current length of apprenticeships and reduce terms where appropriate
Our outcomes in tertiary education

New and better ways of doing business

Specialised training programs

The Strategic Skills Program (SSP) is the NSW competitive training program to support economic development and productivity. The NSW Skills Priority List for 2011-2012 is produced to provide registered training organisations (RTOs) with information relating to SSP funded training priorities.

This priority information is developed in consultation with industry organisations, NSW Industry Training Advisory Bodies, National Industry Skills Councils and Job Services Australia providers and updated on a biannual basis.

State Training Services developed the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Training Strategy to assist workers in the ECEC industry meet the requirements of the National Quality Framework. The strategy combines recognition of prior learning, formal training and language, literacy and numeracy support to provide workers without formal qualifications the opportunity to receive recognition for their current skills and training and address any skill gaps. In 2011, the Strategy committed over $5.7 million to assist over 800 workers in NSW.

The 2010-2011 Kickstart Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program delivered 74 courses across New England, North Coast, Hunter, Central Coast, Illawarra and Western Sydney regions. Of the 892 participants who commenced training, approximately 60% achieved an employment or training outcome in 2011. Regional course negotiations involved key employers and industry groups and targeted priority industries.

The NSW Government partnered with registered group training organisations and RTOs to develop and deliver pre-apprenticeship training for young people in NSW. The project, which brings together industry, employers and training providers, aims to maximise employability skills and gain apprenticeship employment for successful participants. Phase 1 of the program achieved nearly 300 apprenticeship outcomes. Funding of $3.2 million is committed to the project for a further 94 pre-apprenticeship training courses targeting over 1,260 participants into priority trades.

NSW Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) have well-established networks of industry stakeholders representing industry associations, enterprises and employers. ITABs regularly engage these stakeholders to obtain feedback on Government policy and initiatives, identify training needs, including skill shortage areas and priorities, and promote the NSW VET training system.

In 2011, TAFE NSW Institutes:

- delivered the innovative Mining Skills Centre Program, consisting of 24 weeks full-time intensive training in the areas of automotive, electrical, fitting and machining and metal fabrication. The training program was developed in collaboration with employers to ensure that it specifically meets the skill and knowledge requirements of these industries (TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute)
- developed an innovative program, including a fully online option, to provide recognition of prior learning for existing workers across Australia in the field of industrial blasting and painting (TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute)
- developed a leadership program focusing on Performance Management for Tamworth Regional Council, targeting technical officers and team leaders (TAFE NSW - New England Institute)
- worked in partnership with Pharmacy Choice® to deliver training from Certificate II to Diploma level qualifications in Community Pharmacy and Retail through a national retail program for independent pharmacies across Australia. Delivery options include online, face-to-face and flexible via distance learning (TAFE NSW - North Coast Institute)
- developed and delivered the first Certificate I in Competitive Manufacturing to staff at Seeley International, a global leader in energy efficient cooling and heating products (TAFE NSW - Northern Sydney Institute)
- delivered a customised Certificate III in Competitive Manufacturing to staff at Seeley International, a global leader in energy efficient cooling and heating products (TAFE NSW - Riverina Institute)
- worked in partnership with Telstra to develop the Technical Career and Qualification Initiative, using the new Integrated Telecommunications Training Package, and up-skill 400
Telstra employees through recognition via an online tool (TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute)

- worked in partnership with the Australian Diabetes Council to deliver Certificate IV in Training and Education to the Council’s Health Education Team through recognition (TAFE NSW - Sydney Institute)

- worked in partnership with local employers to provide enhanced training to apprentices in electro-technology, metal fabrication and fitting and machining (TAFE NSW - Western Institute)

- worked in partnership with Jenolan Caves Trust to up-skill existing employees by providing recognition, gap training and assessment for several Certificate IV level qualifications (TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute).

Improving skills and qualification levels across the NSW workforce

The NSW 2021 plan sets ambitious targets for higher levels of participation and attainment in both VET and higher education, for all students and students in equity groups.

One of the key steps to achieving these targets in 2011 was the establishment of a Review of Tertiary Pathways, chaired by the Parliamentary Secretary for Tertiary Education and Skills. The review will identify enablers and barriers that must be addressed to maximise student capabilities and opportunities to contribute to NSW society in the future. Under consideration are the key pathways from schools to VET, from VET to higher education, and the support required by Aboriginal, low socioeconomic status (SES) and regional and remote students to undertake and attain higher education qualifications. The Review Committee will make recommendations to the Minister by 30 June 2012.

NSW is working collaboratively with the Commonwealth, States and Territories to develop and implement a plan to harmonise administrative arrangements for apprentices and trainees across jurisdictions. Minor efficiencies have been achieved in the consistent formatting of the national training contract and in principle agreement has been reached on the status of apprentices working across jurisdictions.

NSW contributed to the development of nationally agreed principles for the delivery of Australian Apprenticeship Support Services. NSW has been the leader in proposing strategic improvements in the delivery of Australian Apprenticeship Support Services.

Review of apprenticeships

NSW promotes the uptake of competency based completion arrangements for all apprentices and trainees, once the designated trade or traineeship qualification is achieved. NSW expanded industry support for competency based progression of apprenticeships resulting in increased competency completion of apprenticeships to 35%.

Competency based progression arrangements are available in the building and construction, manufacturing, food processing, furnishing, textile clothing and footwear and printing and graphic arts industries. Shorter term apprenticeships have been established in industries including food processing, hairdressing, marine engineering, beauty therapy, stonemasonry, construction carpentry, signage, joinery, roof tiling and horticulture.

Reduced term apprenticeships are available in the automotive, hairdressing and beauty therapy trades for apprentices who hold the relevant trade qualification but need more work experience. They are also in other trades where the apprentice holds a relevant lower level qualification or has completed a pre-vocational or pre-apprenticeship course or a lower level traineeship in the same industry area.

Trainees may be given credit towards a traineeship at Certificate III level or higher where they hold a relevant lower level qualification in the same industry area.

Part-time apprenticeships have been successfully introduced in the hairdressing industry. Ongoing discussions are occurring with other industries to introduce similar arrangements.
Our outcomes in our communities

The Office of Communities is an important contributor to the delivery of NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One. The Office is a lead agency for the key targets under Goal 24, ‘Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities’, which recognises that people benefit from being actively involved in communities, having strong social relationships, feeling supported, and being able to participate in activities, events and decisions that are important to them.

By 2016 we will:

- increase the proportion of the NSW population involved in volunteering, to exceed the national average
- increase the proportion of the NSW population involved in local community organisations, to exceed the national average
- increase the proportion of the population who have weekly social contact with family or friends, to exceed the national average
- increase the proportion of the population who feel they have someone to turn to in times of crisis, to exceed the national average.

The Office also works closely with other agencies to foster opportunities and partnerships with Aboriginal people. We work to empower local community members to take an active role in decision making and build community skill and capacity, and to work with Aboriginal people to deliver services in a way that meets the needs of the local community.

By 2021 we will:

- increase the number of Aboriginal communities the NSW Government is partnering with to improve local outcomes
- increase the number of opportunities for Aboriginal cultural activities and events.

These are ambitious targets and we cannot achieve them on our own. We work with other government agencies, non-government organisations, the community and the business sector to meet the challenges and create opportunities.

The following table provides an overview of the Office’s performance against the NSW 2021 plan and the Office’s Community Involvement and Participation targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>2006/07 % (RSE)</th>
<th>2010/11 % (RSE)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of the population aged 18 years and over involved in volunteering</td>
<td>32.7 (4.2%)</td>
<td>36.6 (5.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of the population aged 18 years and over who have face to face weekly social contact with family or friends living outside the household</td>
<td>78.9 (1.3%)</td>
<td>75.8 (2.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of the population aged 18 years and over who feel they are able to get help in times of crisis</td>
<td>92.8 (0.7%)</td>
<td>92.6 (1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of population aged 18 years and over participating in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Physical activity</td>
<td>58.7 (2.2%)</td>
<td>69.1 (3.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Attending a cultural or leisure venue</td>
<td>87.0 (0.9%)</td>
<td>71.1 (4.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of the population aged 18 years and over who feel very safe/safe walking alone in local area</td>
<td>46.7 (1.4%)</td>
<td>50.0 (3.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of the population aged 18 years and over who feel they are able to have a say within community on important issues always/most of the time</td>
<td>29.0 (4.8%)</td>
<td>27.8 (6.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Sources: ABS General Social Survey: Summary Results NSW, 2006 (cat. no. 4159.0); Calculations based on Microdata: General Social Survey, CURF, NSW, 2010.

Notes:
1 Relative Standard Error - the extent to which the survey estimate may deviate from the true result, expressed as a percentage.
2 Respondents were asked: The next few questions are about unpaid voluntary work, that is, help willingly given in the form of time, service or skills to a club, organisation or association. Please exclude any voluntary work done overseas. ‘Since this time in [month] last year, did you do any unpaid work for any [of these types of organisations]?’
3 Respondents were asked: ‘In the last [period], that is since this time in [period], have you seen family or friends [who do not live with you]?’
4 Respondents were asked: ‘If you needed to, could you ask someone [who does not live with you] for any of these types of support in a time of crisis?’
5 Respondents were asked: ‘(In the last 12 months), Did you participate in any physical activities for exercise or recreation?’
6 Respondents were asked: ‘How often do you feel you are able to have a say within the general community, on issues that are important to you?’
Making it easier for people to be involved in their communities

The work we do, the people we serve, and the issues we address all encourage community connections, helping to build stronger communities through the development of social capital. The Office has a broad reach, spanning children and young people, volunteering, Veterans’ affairs, Aboriginal affairs, sport and recreation, and entertainment venues and parklands.

Through the programs and services we run, we increase volunteering and community participation and improve our sense of community. Many of our programs also engage marginalised individuals and groups in mainstream activities.

Increase volunteering

Volunteering underpins our society, binds us together and connects, strengthens and sustains our communities. A vibrant, growing and sustainable volunteer environment is fundamental to community building.

Volunteers support community-based sport, charities and cultural institutions, many of which would not be able to function without their assistance. Volunteering also provides opportunities for social interaction, benefitting participants and recipients alike. In NSW, over 2 million people volunteer and in 2010 they contributed more than an estimated 235 million hours of service.

■ Developing the first Volunteering Strategy for NSW following extensive community consultation. Consultations were conducted across greater metropolitan and regional areas, with more than 400 people participating, representing nearly as many volunteer-engaging organisations. Key volunteer-engaging sectors were consulted, including community welfare, sport, environment, emergency services, health, arts and cultural institutions.

The Strategy encourages more people to volunteer and supports those that do. Initiatives include recruitment, training for volunteer managers, research to improve the evidence base of volunteering, and support for volunteer mediation services.

The strategy focuses on 5 key areas:

1. Making it easier to volunteer.
2. Broadening the volunteer base.
3. Volunteering as a pathway to employment.
4. Improving recognition and support for workplace volunteering.
5. Valuing volunteers and celebrating their contributions.

■ The Volunteer Utilisation Research Project identified success factors in programs for engaging highly skilled, culturally diverse volunteers. The findings of this research were used to develop a Benefits Kit, which includes documentation and training for organisations, to support organisations in engaging such volunteers. The project was co-funded by the Office of Communities and the City of Sydney. A copy of the Benefits Kit can be obtained at info@volunteering.com.au

■ The Volunteer of the Year Awards, recognise volunteer effort and commitment, and are the only State-wide program in Australia open to all sectors of volunteering. The Centre for Volunteering is responsible for the Awards. Nominations have grown substantially since the Awards were established in 2007. In that year there were 170 participants and in 2011 over 5,000 volunteers were recognised, either individually or as part of a volunteer team or not-for-profit organisation. As Patron of the Awards, the Minister for Citizenship and Communities provided $27,000 in 2011 towards the Awards. This included a one-off enhancement of $12,000 for a special Excellence in Volunteer Management Award to mark IYV+10, the tenth anniversary of the United Nation’s International Year of Volunteers. Regional winners were acknowledged locally and recognised at a ceremony for nominees, where final winners were announced. The Minister presented winners with their Awards at a reception on 5 December, the United Nation’s International Volunteer Day.

The most widespread volunteering activity occurs in the sporting sector. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that in 2010, over 33% of all NSW volunteers worked in this sector. The sport and recreation industry depends heavily on volunteers, including
Our outcomes in our communities

those working in management roles concerned with governance and regulation. The Office has supported volunteer effort in this area through a number of projects, including the following:

■ The Best Buy for Recruitment Strategy aims to identify the ‘best buy’ for recruitment for different sports, target groups and contexts. Research has commenced, and will be used to assist sporting organisations to determine the most effective recruitment strategies and develop resources to assist them.

■ The Hands Up! project trialled volunteer models to engage new groups particularly retirees, as sport volunteers. Through the project a volunteer needs survey was developed for clubs and a volunteer management training program implemented. The project was undertaken in partnership with AFL NSW/ACT.

Increase community participation

It is important that everyone in NSW, regardless of age, location, background and economic circumstances, be involved in their communities. Through this involvement connections are forged and both individual and community wellbeing sustained. One of the Office’s key goals is to encourage and actively support participation in community activities.

Developing, strengthening and engaging communities feature prominently in the NSW 2021 plan. In these domains, NSW 2021 includes goals and targets that have not previously been explicit roles of the NSW Government. The Department now has lead responsibility for several of these goals and targets. The Office delivers community involvement and participation work in targeted communities at local and regional level, provides a coordinated point of contact for local communities and agencies to link up with the Office and strengthens the Office’s presence and coordination across NSW, maximising the impact and reach of Office services, facilities, events, funding, regulation and other activities.

During 2010-2011, a wide range of activities and programs were delivered to increase the opportunities available to the community to participate in sporting activities. The Office’s Sport and Recreation Centres provided a number of activities to support community participation in sport and active recreation. Over 280,000 people visited the 11 Sport and Recreation Centres in the reporting period. Table 4 provides a summary of sport and recreation activities and participants.
Table 4: Sport and recreation statistics

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people attending Sport and Recreation Centre programs</td>
<td>183,160</td>
<td>188,226</td>
<td>192,195</td>
<td>194,085</td>
<td>92,943</td>
<td>191,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people attending programs at former Olympic venues (the Sydney International Equestrian, Regatta and Shooting Centres)</td>
<td>526,535</td>
<td>494,724*</td>
<td>520,503</td>
<td>549,483</td>
<td>268,546</td>
<td>596,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people with a disability attending Sport and Recreation Centre programs</td>
<td>3,150</td>
<td>3,152</td>
<td>2,650</td>
<td>3,059</td>
<td>1,747</td>
<td>3,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people from culturally diverse communities attending Sport and Recreation Centre programs</td>
<td>13,108</td>
<td>11,567</td>
<td>12,836</td>
<td>16,808</td>
<td>7,410</td>
<td>12,380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Attendance at the Sydney International Equestrian was affected by the equine influenza outbreak.

Source: Sport and Recreation, Client Information Management System.

Key opportunities provided during the reporting period included:

- **Camps for school communities** were designed to assist students through experiential learning to develop social skills and independence, to challenge them and enjoy the benefits of an active lifestyle. In the reporting period 112,350 students took part. Students from a range of cultural backgrounds participated including Aboriginal students and students from culturally and linguistically backgrounds. Programs for these groups were tailored to address their specific cultural beliefs and customs.

- **Camps for children and young people with special needs** provided an important opportunity for migrant children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a serious illness and their siblings, and children with a disability to participate in sport and recreation activities in a supportive and inclusive environment. Examples in this reporting period include winter camps at Jindabyne for 474 disabled skiers, and camps for 266 young people with a disability and their siblings.

- **Holidays camps** offered opportunities for children to boost self-confidence and meet new friends through the shared experience of trying new recreational activities. In this reporting period 6,810 children attended holiday camps. Family camps were also offered providing 4,282 people with an affordable holiday experience.

- **Programs and camps for interest groups**, including training camps for State Emergency Service Cadets and Rural Fire Service Cadets, Men’s Shed Conference, Police and Community Youth Clubs, Connecting Carers Group and the Tackling Violence program. In the 18 months to 31 December 2011 some 16,500 people attended these and other community programs.

- **Programs for sports-specific communities**, including equestrian and water sports such as swimming, fishing, sailing, rowing and canoeing, provided opportunities for people to either try new activities or increase their skill and development in their chosen activity. Sports Development programs were attended by 1,042 people in the 18 months to 31 December 2011.
Our outcomes in our communities

- Programs for older adults were offered, with the aim of assisting a healthy ageing process and improving wellbeing though increasing opportunities for exercise and social interaction. In the 18 months to 31 December 2011, 354 older adults attended.

- Facilities for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are provided at Centres to enable culturally specific programs to be run. Groups attending included immigrant support groups, and cultural and religious groups. In the 18 months to 31 December 2011, 20,000 people attended programs.

The Sydney International Equestrian Centre hosted 9 international events and 15 national events in the 12 months to 31 December 2011 with a total of 118,371 visitors (170,088 for the reporting period). Events included the Sydney International Three Day event, National Dressage Championships, Summer Showjumping Classic, Sydney CDI Dressage, the FEI Eventing World Cup and the FEI Vaulting Championships.

The Sydney International Regatta Centre is the premier rowing and canoeing facility in Australia and is among the top 5 competition venues in the world. In the 12 months to 31 December there were 428,564 visitors to the centre (634,854 for the reporting period). Events included:

- Lap the Lake, with over 450 registered competitors
- Australian University Rowing Championships, with over 2,400 athletes competing in 46 events over 3 days
- Swimming NSW State Open Water Swim Championships, with 1,800 competitors in a 2-day event
- Community Fishing, with 18 sessions and 180 participants
- DefQon, with just under 20,000 people, 8 stages and 11 hours of dance music
- Rotary Youth Driver Awareness, with 22 sessions and nearly 2,750 students.

The Sydney International Shooting Centre is an international standard shooting venue, with 15 local Shooting Clubs also using the facilities. In the 12 months to 31 December there were 49,941 visitors to the centre (60,480 for the reporting period).

In 2010-2011:

- the finals range was upgraded for the ISSF World Cup, which was held 21-31 March 2011. Over 700 athletes from 68 different nations participated in this event, which was a qualifier for the 2012 Olympic Games
- the final stage of the 2011 International Paralympic series was held, with over 150 athletes competing for a place for the 2012 London Paralympic Games
- participation in the Try Shooting program increased by 31% from 2010 to 2011. The program allows people to try the sport without joining a club.

ENCOURAGING THE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people make up over 17% of the NSW population and are an important part of every community. Increasing their participation in community activities and providing opportunities for their engagement in the broader community are important priorities for the Office.

- The NSW Youth Advisory Council supported by the Office, advises the Government on matters of concern to young people, and on policies and programs aimed at young people. The 12 members of the Council are appointed by the Minister for Citizenship and Communities and are aged between 12-25 years. The Council provides a channel of communication between young people in the community and the Government. In 2011, the Council consulted with more than 280 young people in rural and regional areas of the State, and with young people who would otherwise not have an opportunity to contribute, to find out about youth participation, community engagement and participation in local government.

- Youth Week 2011 (1-10 April) in NSW involved more than 4,350 young people in planning, organising and managing more than 800 events and activities in all 152 local government areas. Almost 100,000 young people participated in local community events, activities and decision making. The young people expressed their ideas, raised matters of concern, acted on issues that affect their lives, and created entertainment. Activities included sporting programs, forums, debates and concerts. Highlights for 2011 included:
– Wheelie Bin Beat Box, in Western Sydney, which provided a platform for performers to demonstrate their original music compositions or DJ mix at live sites using hand-crafted mobile, solar-powered music stations

– YouthRock, a State-wide youth band competition coordinated by the students and staff at Belmore Boys High School

– a design competition judged by the Youth Week Young People’s Advisory Committee

– raising awareness of mental health issues affecting young people, with activities organised by young people with sponsorship from beyondblue.

Youth Week also provides an opportunity for the wider community to listen to young people and celebrate the positive contributions they make.

The NSW Government presented 4 awards as part of the annual Local Government Week Awards to acknowledge the considerable commitment of councils in helping young people plan and coordinate Youth Week programs and activities. Finalists and winners were chosen by members of the NSW Youth Week Young People’s Advisory Committee, with the 2011 winners being:

- Walgett Shire Council, for the best on-going commitment to local Youth Week programs
- Hornsby Shire Council, for the most innovative Youth Week program
- Snowy River Shire Council, for best small council with the most outstanding Youth Week program
- Fairfield City Council, for the best local Youth Week program
- Better Futures Enhancement – one-off grants of up to $50,000 were provided for 50 projects in local communities to engage young people in sports and cultural activities and build communication and leadership skills. Projects included transition to high school, skills development in media and the entertainment industry, leadership skills, leadership training, and participation in accredited training courses.

At the end of the funding period (30 September 2011) 86 young people including 26 young Aboriginal people were participating in the project. Other young people have been placed on a waiting list. As a result of participation in the project, 17 participants had gained licences with 14 close to completing 120 hours supervised driving. Two had found employment where having a licence was a requirement and 6 enrolled in Newcastle University for 2012 and are able to continue to live at home and drive to Newcastle. The project has continued after the end of the funding period through established partnerships and ongoing community support.

- The Duke of Edinburgh Award includes training and supporting Award Coordinators, administering the records of the young people taking part and issuing Awards. The Awards provided an opportunity for almost 8,000 young people aged between 14 and 25 years to develop their skills and abilities. Participation of the community in the Awards increased, with 450 organisations approved to operate the Awards. NSW now has almost half the total number of the nationally approved organisations.

- The Best Buy for Recruitment research aims to assist sporting organisations to determine the most effective recruitment strategies to increase participation and provide tools for ongoing monitoring and surveillance. Stage 1 of the project, completed during 2011, involved the development of a research plan, including a research design and data collection process.
Our outcomes in our communities

ENSURING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES ARE RELEVANT AND ACCESSIBLE

The Office encourages all members of the community to enrich their lives by participating in cultural, sport and recreational activities, regularly reviewing its policies and programs to ensure that all sections and regions of the community are well served and able to participate, regardless of age, cultural background, disability or health issues.

A particular focus is given to the development of programs for young people, particularly those at risk, Aboriginal communities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people with a disability. People of all ages and needs should have the opportunity to choose activities that bring enjoyment and satisfaction to their lives.

Disadvantaged and at risk children and young people

- Fundamental Movement Skills provided 164 disadvantaged children aged 3-5 years in the Western Sydney area with at least 1 school term of motor skill development to improve their gross motor skills. Many of the children were from Aboriginal backgrounds. The parents, carers and teachers of the children also took part.

- The Youth at-Risk Fitness program provided an opportunity for young people from Western Sydney, from within the juvenile justice system, to be involved in sport or active recreation activities. Evidence suggests that the involvement of at risk youth in physical activity programs can increase their sense of belonging and reduce their propensity to re-offend. The program promoted a healthy lifestyle and provided structure in the participants’ day to day lives.

- Attendance Extravaganza encourages students to maintain a 95% attendance record at school by rewarding them with the opportunity to take part in a sport program they would enjoy. The program involved 450 students in Campbelltown who were identified as being at risk of dropping out of school.

- Six Youth Sports Tournaments were run in Campbelltown over 3 vacation periods. Over 400 teenagers from 12 years of age, including more than 100 Aboriginal young people, took part in sports such as volleyball, Oztag, soccer, touch and basketball. The program aimed to engage youth through sport and physical activity.

Aboriginal communities

- The Indigenous Sport Program promoted the active participation of Aboriginal people in sport and physical activity and encouraged community ownership and management of sport and physical recreation activities. Through this program, our Sport and Recreation division funded targeted sports and supported Indigenous Sport Development Officers, the Aboriginal Women’s Program, and the Aboriginal Trainee Initiative. In the reporting period 32,274 people from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal backgrounds took part in the program. The Office delivers the program in partnership with the Australian Sports Commission.

- Traditional Indigenous Games brought together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, helped reconnect urban Aboriginal young people to their culture, boosted education retention, promoted reconciliation, provided essential training in social interaction, and enhanced physical health. Our Sport and Recreation division provided a training guide to assist in the running of the Indigenous Games. During the year, 19 programs were run with 616 participants. Of these, over half (346) were Aboriginal people.

People with a disability

- The Building Inclusive Communities program funded 27 regional initiatives to link together people with a disability, sporting clubs and associations, and community disability organisations. Through the program opportunities for people with a disability are increased. In this reporting period funding priority was given to initiatives that focused on local forums, regional sport audits and directories and targeted partnerships.

- Disability access at Parramatta Stadium was improved including toilets, turnstiles, shop counters and lifts and wheelchair ramps added to the car park.

- $604,000 was provided through the Disability Sport Assistance Program and State Sport Organisations for Disability to remove barriers for people with a disability to participate in sport, recreation and structured physical activity.
Sports Awareness Day was held in March 2011 in the Shoalhaven in conjunction with the Shoalhaven Disability Sport Network. Participants had the opportunity to try a variety of sports including AFL, football (soccer), dancing/Zumba, basketball, boccia and goalball, and obtain information on a range of sport and recreation activities including disabled surfing, swimming, Special Olympics and sailability. The day was attended by 179 participants and their carers.

Through the Gateway to Sport program, a number of disability-specific resources, including programs that provide for people with disabilities, were developed to be available in early 2012.

People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds

Thirty-four multicultural specific programs for 2,063 people were held across 5 Sport and Recreation Centres in 2010-11.

$90,000 was provided to community based organisations to increase regular, on-going participation opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

Initiatives to support multiculturalism in sport and recreation including the Sikh Community Annual Winter Sports Weekend, the African Men’s Education Network in Wagga Wagga, the Multicultural Women’s Sport Leaders Program, Stay Safe at the Beach, an introductory coaching program for volunteers from the refugee community, Women Only Swimming, and Wimswim (Women only learn-to-swim and leisure swimming opportunities).

The African Men’s Education Network (MEN) in Wagga Wagga brings multi-national African men together for sport and recreation activities, and individual and group life-skill learning. Most teams in the local football (soccer) competition have multi-national African men and youth/people enrolled with their clubs. Uranquinty’s first division and third division teams are examples of teams with over 50% of their players from the African community. A number of African men have completed their coach education and are coaching young players. The program commenced in 2010.

OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ADDRESS BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Appropriate facilities are one of the cornerstones of community participation in sport and recreation. Infrastructure plays a major role in enabling people to engage in sport and active recreation as participants, volunteers and spectators. The Office improves and expands community sport and recreation infrastructure through its funding programs:

- In 2010-2011, over 58 grants totalling $600,000 were made to not-for-profit organisations to improve shooting facilities.
- Through 11 Sport and Recreation Centres, 9 regional offices and the Sydney International Equestrian, Shooting and Regatta Centres, Sport and Recreation provides the community with opportunities to participate in many activities, from outdoor education for disadvantaged children to family weekends.
- The Sport and Recreation Centres offer programs for schools, children and young people, families, corporate groups and community organisations. They have on site accommodation, recreation facilities and catering, and qualified staff to develop and run recreation programs. In 2010-2011, $3.76 million was spent on upgrading Centre facilities.
- $27 million was provided to Netball NSW, for the construction, over 3 years, of a new Netball Centre of Excellence at Sydney Olympic Park. This is the first major new sporting facility built at the Park since the Olympics. The Centre will include a new international standard show court, 5 other courts, gym and training facilities, a new headquarters for Netball NSW and the Netball Hall of Fame.
- $5.5 million was provided to Hockey NSW, to fund a state wide growth strategy for hockey over the next 3 years, targeting areas where participation in the sport could increase by 40 to 200%. New hockey fields are being built in 7 locations. In late 2011, the Minister for Sport and Recreation presented grants to Macarthur and Tamworth Hockey Associations for new hockey pitches.

A number of people experience barriers to participation in sport and recreation activities. For some, the cost of sport and recreational activities prevents or limits their ability to participate. In addition, recent data shows that a greater proportion of male students compared with female students....
Our outcomes in our communities

participate in sport. To help address these barriers, the Office subsidised a number of disadvantaged school students, and supported research on the participation of girls in sport.

- The School Sport Subsidy Scheme supported the involvement of 355 students, including 84 Aboriginal students, in a range of sports in 2010 and 2011. Sports included football (soccer), rugby league, netball, gymnastics, hockey, little athletics, self-defence and swimming.

- The Office continued to support the Girls in Sport longitudinal research study through its membership of the Project Advisory Group. The study will provide important information on how to increase moderate to vigorous physical activity levels among girls in school Years 7-10.

Adults and children are more likely to participate in sport and recreation if they feel safe and are not worried about harassment, bullying or sports rage. The Office works with the sporting industry to identify and address inappropriate behaviours in sport. Our Sport and Recreation division continues to build on successful initiatives to assist the industry to operate safely and reduce inappropriate behaviour. Strategies in this reporting period included:

- Coloured Vest program – making beginner officials easily recognisable so players and spectators understand their limited experience and create a culture of support towards novice officials. Since the program began in 2006, some 1,505 Coloured Vest kits have been ordered and distributed to clubs from 34 different sports. The program’s marketing plan was reviewed and the product has subsequently been re-packaged, and a new marketing plan developed, including methods to promote and evaluate the program.

- Play by the Rules – helping clubs deal with discrimination, harassment, abuse and a range of inappropriate behaviours in sport. The training helps club officers develop the skills to resolve such issues in their club or organisation. Over 14,000 courses were completed in 2010-2011, an increase of 242% from 2009-2010.

- Sport Rage Prevention – helping volunteer committees address sport rage at local club level. More than 7,775 free kits have been ordered and distributed to sports clubs throughout NSW since the kit was first launched in 2006. In addition over 519,517 promotional materials have been ordered and distributed to NSW clubs under this program.

- Anger Education – trialling the first education program for spectators and parents who have been suspended from attending the junior rugby league. The program provided education about appropriate ways of supporting children’s sport and teams. It was given a Bronze Award at the Sporting Injuries Committee’s 2011 NSW Sports Safety Awards in the category of Outstanding Safe Sports Practices – Regional/Club Level.

- Child Protection courses – explaining individual and organisational responsibilities under the NSW child protection legislation. During 2010-2011, 266 people from sporting clubs and associations attended 13 seminars across NSW.

- Drugs in Sport – educating the sporting community about drug issues. During 2010-2011, Drugs in Sport presentations were delivered to 2,167 people, including 1,447 athletes, 312 parents of younger athletes, 176 coaches, 176 students and 56 officials. This project is a collaboration of the Office, State Sport Organisations, regional academies of sport and recreation and regional offices and schools.

- Harassment free sport – 21 courses with 438 participants were held to help organisations deal with conflict harassment, discrimination and child abuse in sport.

Table 5 provides a summary of activities in the reporting period.
Table 5: Harassment-free sports initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>2010-2011 Presentations/usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sport Rage Prevention resources</td>
<td>7,775 kits have been ordered and distributed in NSW since the kits were made available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured Vest Program</td>
<td>At 31 December 2011 there were 1,505 clubs running this program across 34 sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play by the Rules</td>
<td>14,056 Play by the Rules online training courses were completed an increase of 242% from 2009-2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection courses</td>
<td>13 courses were run for 266 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defusing Conflict and Anger</td>
<td>Four specialist courses were run for 100 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs in Sport</td>
<td>Presentations were made to 1,447 athletes, 176 coaches, 56 officials and 312 parents of young athletes and 176 students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND NETWORKS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Community-based sport and recreation not only benefits the health and wellbeing of individual participants by building closely connected communities, its benefits are community-wide. Through sport, recreation, events and venues the Office provides opportunities for community members to build supportive connections and develop strong community networks. Providing easy access to, and having local and useful information on opportunities and activities, encourages people to take part. During the reporting period initiatives included the following:

- Go Play – (www.goplay.nsw.gov.au) brings together in one convenient location hundreds of school holiday activities and ideas including art, culture, sport, and recreational activities. Additional information is also provided including cafes, disability access and public transport, with the option to search for nearby activities on an interactive map. Participating agencies include museums and galleries, Sport and Recreation, Forests NSW, and Trainworks. Go Play is coordinated by the NSW Government and is a partnership between the Office and the Powerhouse Museum.

  Go Play attracted 97,516 visits to the website and 367,684 page views, as well as 3,989 downloads of the iPhone app in the 12 months since its launch in December 2010. A facebook page established in early December 2011, has so far attracted 290 ‘likes’, providing potential reach to over 83,000 people.

  A free iPhone application has recently been added to provide a practical tool for parents to search for activities while they are out and about.

  An online survey of users, run during the July 2011 school holidays, found 93.9% would recommend the site to friends. Project partners have also reported increased visibility of their events since listing on Go Play.

- The Gateway to Sport website (www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/gatewaytosport) provides easily accessible information on a range of sports to assist people choosing sporting activities. The website acts as a portal to existing ‘find a club’ facilities on sport websites. Gateway to Sport received 31,447 unique page views in the reporting period (10,858 in the 6 months to 31 December 2010). The top 5 activities looked at were touch football, netball, AFL, football and cricket.

  The project is a joint initiative of the Office, the Australian Sports Commission’s NSW Active After-School Communities program, and State Sporting Organisations (SSO).
Our outcomes in our communities

- The Healthy Kids website (www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au) provides resources and ideas on physical activity and healthy eating for children and is a joint initiative of the Office, NSW Department of Education and Communities, Ministry of Health, and the National Heart Foundation – (NSW Division). The site was redesigned to ensure it remained user-friendly, provided up-to-date information, resources and ideas on physical activity, sport and healthy eating for children. The site was relaunched in February 2011.

Providing networking and training opportunities to those involved in delivering sport and recreation helps to promote and develop leadership in the sport and recreation industries. In 2010-2011 the Office sponsored a number of events, educational forums, seminars and training sessions:

- Breakfasts were held in November 2010 and June 2011 for CEO’s and senior managers of SSO and peak bodies, providing professional development and networking opportunities. The 2 breakfasts attracted a total of 130 participants.

- Three Coaching and 3 Officiating Director breakfasts were held in March, June and September in the reporting period. The events, which attracted between 18-20 participants, provided an opportunity for professional Coaching Directors and Officiating Directors to discuss issues, share good practice, network and learn from each other. Guest speakers provided an education component to each event.

- Two Industry Lunchtime Forums were held in 2011. The February forum ‘How Facebook and Twitter are Working for Sporting Organisations’ attracted 60 SSO representatives, and the August forum on ‘Social Media Marketing’ was attended by 75 representatives.

- Two issues-specific seminars targeting sport development officers, ‘Exploring School Sport Unit partnerships with State Sporting Organisations and Growth and Maturation in Junior Sport’, were attended by over 140 people representing over 30 sporting organisations. These seminars are also available to volunteers.

- Eighteen Running Your Club workshops were held in metropolitan and regional areas of NSW, with 252 people attending. The workshops included best practice guidelines, and useful tips, templates and checklists to help club directors, administrators and committee members effectively run their organisations. The Office collaborated with local government, sporting organisations and community-based sporting associations in running the workshops.

- Youth Worker Training was provided in metropolitan Sydney about how to use sport and recreation activities as a means of engaging young people. An additional 40 youth workers also participated in sport-specific training in Oztag, football (soccer) and basketball.

- The Coaches and Officials Education and Accreditation program supports coaches and officials through training courses. Courses are offered face-to-face, online and via correspondence and include Coaching General Principles, Officiating General Principles, Assessor and Presenter Training, Training agencies, Accreditation Course Auditing, and Sport Education workshops. A total of 578 coaches and officials received training.

- In 2011, the Australian Sports Commission Mentor Training course was delivered to 41 people including 12 metropolitan coaching coordinators, to assist them to develop mentoring systems. The Course focus in this reporting period was in the area of officiating. Mentoring is an effective way for coaches and officials to learn and develop their skills under the supervision of a senior coach or official. The course was delivered in conjunction with State Sporting Organisations including NSW Rugby League.

THE YEAR AHEAD

- The NSW Volunteering Strategy will be implemented to encourage more people to volunteer and support those who do.

- Unleash Your Creative Potential pilot project will run in the first school holiday period of 2012. The project is a 5-day creative arts school holiday program with Opera Australia open to young people in Years 9 and 10 living in Western Sydney. It will be held at Parramatta Stadium. Through contact with professional artists, the young people will gain personal development, learn new dramatic and creative expression skills, and create their own unique dramatic works of arts.

- The ANZAC Community Grants program will be introduced to help young people and multicultural communities participate in the ANZAC spirit and traditions. Applications
will be invited for grants of up to $5,000 from ex-service organisations, community groups, schools and other educational institutions, local government, museums and historical societies.

- The Sydney International Regatta Centre will host national selection events and training camps in rowing and canoeing in preparation for the Summer Olympic Games in London in 2012, the World Powerboat Championships on 19-20 May, and the opening round of the Samsung World Cup in 2013 and 2014. Opportunities for staging events at night will be expanded with lighting towers to be erected across the site and sections of the competition lake and cycle path.

- A number of initiatives are planned for 2012 at Sydney International Shooting Centre, including providing additional accommodation, installing lighting to enable night shooting events, catering for all licensed shooting disciplines, and introduction of indoor and field archery. Two upcoming events are the World Fire Fighter Games and the World IPC (disabled) International.

- A review of Sport and Recreation programs and activities will be undertaken, and will focus on our business direction, programs and operations.

- The review of the Combat Sports Act 2008, which provides for the registration of combatants and others involved in combat sports including managers, trainers and promoters, will be completed. Possible legislative reforms will be developed to strengthen regulation of professional and amateur combat sports.

- Commence work to establish the Far West Academy of Sport as an independent community-based organisation.

- Undertake stage 2 of the Best Buy for Recruitment research in partnership with Australian Rugby Union, NSW Rugby Union and Australian Sports Commission.

- Youth Week 2012 is planned for 13-22 April 2012.

**Improve our sense of community**

Strong and resilient communities are able to use their resources and capabilities to respond and adapt to crises and other pressures. These resources include, among others, social capital such as networks, and strong information and communication systems. Opportunities are sought to encourage the development of social interaction and the cohesion that develops when people come together and express themselves through communal activities and sports.

- The Better Futures program provided funding for up to 62 prevention and early intervention projects targeted at young people aged 9-18 years in areas of high need. Better Futures aims to improve outcomes for young people, to develop resilience and skills for a healthy, safe and productive adult life, and support their engagement in the community particularly through sport, recreation and cultural activities.

In the second half of 2011, the Office worked closely with the NSW Youth Advisory Council and the Youth Action and Policy Association to consult young people and youth and community organisations throughout NSW to review the Better Futures program. More than 1,100 people provided input to the review through face-to-face consultation, submissions and the Youth Advisory Council’s Facebook page. The review will ensure Better Futures program continues to provide young people in NSW with the opportunity to participate in positive development activities that strengthen their connection with their communities.

- Four projects, collectively known as the Community Involvement and Participation Plan, were developed by the Office to embed and develop place-based and strength-based ways of working in NSW communities, to understand how to sustain socially resilient communities, to develop and model participatory and inclusive practices for children and young people in government agencies, and to trial and implement the use of media and digital technology and increase opportunities for the community to participate in the work of the Office.
A livable community is one where all members of the community feel safe, where people can move freely and without fear of violence, harassment or crime. Feeling safe and being safe are high priorities for all communities.

- Tackling Violence is a community education, early intervention and prevention program that works with local rugby league clubs to promote changed attitudes and behaviours to domestic violence in regional NSW. The education component of the program was developed in partnership with Mudgin-Gal Aboriginal Women’s Corporation and is co-delivered by high-profile Aboriginal rugby league players.

  - In 2011, 14 communities and 17 clubs were involved.

  - Rugby League Clubs included the Dubbo CYMS and Dubbo Macquarie Raiders (Dubbo), Tingha Tigers (Tingha/Inverell), Lower Clarence Magpies (Maclean/Yamba), Moree Boomerangs and Moree Boars (Moree), Warren Bulldogs (Warren), Macksville Eagles (Macksville/Bowraville), Northern Rivers United (Lismore), Wilcannia Boomerangs (Wilcannia), Menindee Yabbies (Menindee), Broken Hill Saints and Broken Hill Geebungs, Walgett Dragons, Wagga Brothers, Macquarie Scorpions (Toronto/Newcastle), and Wellington Cowboys.

  - 120 students participated in 3 sporting camps to address domestic violence and healthy relationships education. The camps were held over 2 days at the Sport and Recreation Centres of Borambola, Lake Burrendong and Myuna Bay. The students came from Wagga Wagga, Warren and Walgett, and Toronto High schools.

  - Volunteer community events were held including:


THE YEAR AHEAD

- Over the next 12 months the Office will develop practices, trial innovation and develop the knowledge and resources required to support the implementation of the Government’s commitment to strengthening local communities. This will include developing the policy framework and practice guides that support strengths and place-based approaches in the community. A framework to measure change in community strength in NSW will be developed. The Office will also host forums (including online) and seminars and publish practice papers to share information on trends and developments in strengths and place-based approaches and practice.

- Implement the findings of the review of Better Futures to provide young people in NSW with the opportunity to participate in positive development activities that strengthen their connection with their communities.

- Expand Go Play to increase the number of partner agencies and details of activities in regional NSW.

Fostering opportunities and partnerships with Aboriginal people

The formation of the Office of Communities in April 2011 brought together agencies with a focus on serving communities, including Aboriginal Affairs. The key achievements of Aboriginal Affairs in 2010-11 are reported in The Department of Family and Community Services Annual Report 2010-11 and include:

- supported the NSW Government in amending the NSW Constitution Act 1902 in September 2010 to recognise Aboriginal people as the first people, affirming their spiritual, cultural, social and economic relationship to their traditional lands, and acknowledging their ongoing contribution to the state of NSW

- amended the Aboriginal Land Rights Regulation 2002 in consultation with the NSW Electoral Commission, to facilitate the more efficient conduct of the 4-yearly elections for the 9 NSW Aboriginal Land Council Councillors

- contributed to NSW policy in the Council of Australian Governments’ (COAG) Indigenous reform agenda (Closing the Gap) targets for life expectancy, literacy, numeracy, employment and education
the NSW and Commonwealth governments signed the Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan to Close the Gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disadvantage.

- completed a major actuarial study into the projected cost of not closing the gap on Aboriginal disadvantage.
- supported the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs’ endorsement of the Northern Regional Partnership Agreement between Local Aboriginal Land Councils, the Commonwealth Government and the NSW Government.
- recognised 21 community engagement groups under the Partnership Community Program draft governance framework.
- funded NGOs to implement the Aboriginal Jobs Together Project.
- adopted Aboriginal Participation in Construction Guidelines to enhance employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- established 2 Sydney Job Compact Steering Committees to improve the focus on Aboriginal employment.
- provided assistance to 301 Aboriginal owned and operated businesses, with 142 jobs created.
- completed the 10 year, $240 million Aboriginal Communities Development Program with housing and infrastructure works in Menindee, Bourke, Brewarrina, Tabulam and Wilcannia undertaken in 2010-2011, and the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and NSW Government delivered improved water and sewerage to 3,000 Aboriginal people.
- provided child protection awareness training to agency staff as part of the Keep Them Safe Program.

Since joining the Office, Aboriginal Affairs have continued work on a number of these initiatives including the COAG Indigenous reform agenda, the Northern Regional Partnership Agreement, and child protection training to agency staff. Further achievements include:

- In November 2011, the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 was amended to improve the efficiency of Aboriginal Land Councils’ management of their community housing.
- In December 2011, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs established the ‘NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 Review Working Group’ to undertake a statutory review of the Act. The working group includes community representatives from the Aboriginal Land Council network. The group will conduct public consultations and call for submissions to assist in the development of possible legislative reforms, and will seek to ensure that concerned people have the opportunity to contribute.

The NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983, administered by Aboriginal Affairs, legally recognises the Aboriginal system of land ownership. The legislation aims to redress past injustices when Aboriginal people were dispossessed of their land by colonisation.

- Employment opportunities were built through:
  - the Aboriginal Jobs Together project, with 40 non-government organisations being funded to create up to 155 Aboriginal cadetships and traineeships. These agreements operate for the period March 2011 to June 2013.
  - Aboriginal Participation in Construction Guidelines, with NSW Government agencies committing to projects to the value of $326 million at the end of 2011.
  - assisting 315 Aboriginal owned and operated businesses, creating 145 jobs in the 18 months to 31 December 2011.

In August 2011, the Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs was established to advise the NSW Government on actions to refocus efforts to close the gap and open up opportunities for Aboriginal people in NSW. The Terms of Reference include the following:

1. to improve service delivery and accountability in Aboriginal Affairs, with particular consideration of the recommendations of the Auditor General’s report on Two Ways Together, and other arising reports.
2. to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW.
3. to improve employment outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW.

Community discussion papers on each of these were released for comment on 13 December 2011.
Our outcomes in our communities

The Office encourages Aboriginal people to take an active role in decision making in their communities, and through the work of Aboriginal Affairs, supports Aboriginal people to take responsibility for their own future.

- Building on previous work, 23 of the 40 Aboriginal Partnership Communities had governance bodies recognised under the Partnership Community Program Draft Framework. This work is part of the Partnership Community Program that strengthens local decision making and reinforces mutual accountability between Aboriginal communities and Government to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people. Emphasis is placed on building the capacity of local leadership and community participation, and on recognition that Aboriginal communities are not homogenous. Over the 7 months from April 2011 the program was reviewed to identify possible improvements. Consultations are currently underway with community members in the partnership communities.

- Opportunities for learning Aboriginal language and culture were progressed with support provided to establish the interim board of the NSW Centre for Aboriginal Language Coordination and Development in November 2011.

- At 31 December 2011 delivered improved water and sewerage to 3,000 Aboriginal people through the NSW Aboriginal Communities Water and Sewerage Joint Project between the NSW Land Council and NSW Government.

- Significantly improved the Safe Families program, located in 5 remote communities. These include establishing Local Aboriginal Reference Groups to identify strategies to address child sexual assault in each community, direct support to individuals and families, and seek solutions to wider community issues contributing to the risk of harm to children and young people.

THE YEAR AHEAD

- Establish a new Regional Partnership Agreement with the Murdi Paaki region to continue progress to close the gap on Indigenous disadvantage. Murdi Paaki region comprises 16 partnership communities in far western NSW, specifically the communities of Bourke, Brewarrina, Broken Hill, Cobar, Collarenebi, Coonamble, Dareton/Wentworth, Enngonia, Goodooga, Gulargambone, Ivanhoe, Lightning Ridge, Menindee, Walgett, Weilmoringle and Wilcannia.

- As part of the work of the Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs a series of community consultations will be held across the State to provide the opportunity for community members to inform the strategy. In the second half of 2012, Yarning Circles will provide comment on the draft strategy developed through these consultations.

- Review the Partnership Community Program increase governance capacity within communities and strengthen local decision making capacity by linking with existing Aboriginal community governance and representative arrangements. Consultations will be concluded during 2012. The information obtained will inform the review of the Partnership Communities Program.

- The Aboriginal Jobs Together program will deliver 155 new Aboriginal traineeships in the disability services sector. These positions will commence in 2012.

- Through the Aboriginal Procurement in Construction Guidelines, $326 million of NSW Government construction contracts have been identified for Aboriginal employment and business development in 2012.

- Implement the revised Safe Families Program focussed on early intervention and prevention targeted at individuals and families. Increased involvement of the non-government sector and greater community control over funding and service delivery are expected.

- The Council for Aboriginal Language Development will continue to support regional language centres in NSW. The NSW Aboriginal Language Policy will be reviewed.