

**MEDIA RELEASE
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Research in three different areas proves invaluable for BCITO

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation [BCITO] is the largest construction related Industry Training Organisation [ITO], servicing over 7000 apprentices/trainees in our qualification areas – the bulk of whom are apprentice carpenters [for more information about the BCITO, visit our website – www.bcito.org.nz].

Apprenticeships within the building and construction sector have increased dramatically over the last 2 years. Training volumes have effectively doubled over that time and the BCITO now has over 7000 trainees/apprentices [in training at any one time].

The role of the BCITO has continued to develop over recent years – from initially being the organisation tasked with setting the standards in qualifications in the building and construction industry, the BCITO has evolved to providing more proactive leadership when dealing with skills-related issues that affect our industry.

The BCITO is committed to being a leading participant in the broader construction sector rather than just the organisation that facilitates the training of those within in it, and the research undertaken by the BCITO contributes to that leadership role.

The BCITO has today released three reports;

- BRANZ econometric overview;
- Workbase Literacy and Numeracy review;
- CBA Focus Group research – trade choices;

BRANZ Econometric Overview

For the second time in as many years the BCITO has commissioned BRANZ to report on building and construction industry activity forecasts and the demand for skills by category. Says BCITO CEO Pieter Burghout, “The information gained from this report will help not only the BCITO with its business planning for coming years, it will also mean we are able to share the information with our clients, our stakeholders and other industry partners. The 2003 report provided information on construction activity by region, including forecasts, and persons employed by trade group. The 2005 report builds on the earlier one by including the estimated number of trainees required to meet future on-site construction demand”.

Workbase Literacy and Numeracy Review

As part of a wider project the BCITO worked with Workbase to review the current situation in regard to foundation skills within the industry. The report has identified a need to develop some clear strategies to raise the foundation skill levels for new entrants to ensure that the level of literacy and numeracy skills could be transferred through to the technical skills needed to work in the industry. The report clearly identified that the most appropriate mechanism for integration of foundation skills and technical skills was the industry training system.

Workbase, which carried out the research/review, consider that industry training is ideal for raising the foundation skills of employees because the setting within which the training takes place provides a unique opportunity for the integration of foundation skills with the technical

skills required on-site. It is an underpinning principle that technical skills are best learnt in an industry setting, and it is Workbase's view that this applies to the learning of foundation skills as well.

The next phase of work is to develop more action-oriented strategies to assist the construction sector address literacy and numeracy problems within its workforce – to be completed during 2005 for promulgation in 2006.

The BCITO and Workbase acknowledge the support of the Government provided through the Tertiary Education Commission.

CBA Consulting – Focus Group Research on Trade Choices

The key purpose of the research was to identify how and why people choose one particular trade over another, and how and why they entered the building and construction industry.

The meetings provided the participants with an opportunity to talk about their trade, their decisions around their choice of trade and career, and also give some feedback on how to improve or change the system. It proved to be an empowering exercise for all involved.

The full reports are available to be downloaded on the NEWS page of the BCITO website - www.bcito.org.nz/news.

The BCITO was set up following the changing of the Apprenticeship Act to the Industry Training Act in 1992. It is the national body – recognised by the Government and appointed by the industry – to set the standards for qualifications and training for the sectors the ITO covers (carpentry, cement & concrete, floor & wall tiling, frame and truss manufacturing, interior systems, proprietary plaster cladding systems, solid plastering, and 'Health and Safety'). The BCITO is currently training over 7000 trainees in these areas.

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