

training
apprenticeships
Australia
Group
traineeships
Group training
apprenticeships
traineeships
Australia
Group training
apprenticeships

Group training

apprenticeships and traineeships

in **Australia**

© Australian National Training Authority, 2001

This work has been produced by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) with the assistance of funding provided by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). It is published by NCVER under licence from ANTA. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this publication may be reported by any process without the written permission of NCVER Ltd. Requests should be made in writing to NCVER Ltd.

The views and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author/project team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian National Training Authority.

ISBN 0 87397 784 X print edition

ISBN 0 87397 785 8 web edition

TD/TNC 67.52

Published by NCVER

ABN 87 007 967 311

252 Kensington Road, Leabrook, SA 5068

PO Box 115, Kensington Park, SA 5068, Australia

www.ncver.edu.au

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	8
Executive summary	9
1 Introduction	14
2 Development of group training in Australia.....	16
Early development, 1970–1985.....	16
Growth of group training, 1986–1995.....	17
Group training, 1995–present.....	18
Summary	21
3 Structure of group training apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia.....	23
The growth of group training in Australia	23
Group training companies and host employers.....	26
Occupational base of group training	29
Intensity and level of training undertaken.....	34
Emergence of part-time apprenticeships.....	36
Introduction of school-based apprenticeships.....	37
4 Characteristics of group training apprentices and trainees	38
Age and gender of group training apprentices and trainees	38
Educational background of group training apprentices and trainees	42
Geographic location of group training apprentices and trainees.....	43
Growth in Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees.....	46
Importance of group training for people reporting a disability	48
People of non-English-speaking backgrounds in group training apprenticeships and traineeships	50
5 Completions and employment outcomes from group training apprenticeships and traineeships	53
Growth in group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions.....	54
Qualifications attained by completing group training apprentices and trainees	56
Changes in the occupational mix of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions.....	57
Characteristics of people completing group training apprenticeships and traineeships	60
Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completion rates and attrition	67
Employment outcomes for group training apprentices and trainees	70

6 Off-the-job training undertaken by group training apprentices and trainees	72
Background	72
Scope	72
Key findings.....	73
Field of study and area of learning.....	73
Provider-based training load.....	76
Training outcomes.....	78
Conclusion	79
References	80
Appendix 1	82
Appendix 2	83

List of tables and figures

Tables

Table 3.1:	Type of employer of apprentices and trainees, June 2000.....	24
Table 3.2:	Number of employed apprentices and trainees by employer type, June 1995–2000	25
Table 3.3:	Occupational mix of apprenticeships and traineeships employed under group training schemes, 1995–2000.....	31
Table 3.4:	Top ten group training apprenticeship and traineeship occupations, 1995 and 2000.....	32
Table 3.5:	Employed group training apprentices and trainees, and all employed persons, by occupation, June 2000.....	33
Table 3.6:	Duration of apprenticeships and traineeships, June 2000	34
Table 3.7:	Qualifications being sought by apprentices and trainees, June 2000.....	35
Table 3.8:	Growth in AQF qualifications, 1995–2000	36
Table 3.9:	Full- and part-time apprenticeships and traineeships, June 2000	36
Table 4.1:	Gender participation in apprenticeships and traineeships, June 1995–2000	39
Table 4.2:	Age participation in apprenticeships and traineeships, June 1995–2000.....	40
Table 4.3:	Group training apprentices and trainees by age, occupation and qualification, June 2000.....	41
Table 4.4:	Highest educational background of apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000	43
Table 4.5:	Apprentices and trainees in each State and Territory, June 2000	44
Table 4.6:	Apprentices and trainees in each geographic region of Australia, June 2000	45
Table 4.7:	Indigenous apprentices and trainees, June 1995–2000	47
Table 4.8:	Apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, June 1995–2000.....	49
Table 4.9:	Growth in the numbers of apprentices and trainees from a non-English-speaking background, June 1995–2000.....	51
Table 5.1:	Distribution of apprenticeship and traineeship completions by major employer types, 1995–2000.....	54
Table 5.2:	Qualifications attained by persons completing apprenticeships and traineeships, June 2000.....	56
Table 5.3:	Number of group training completions by occupation group, 1995 and 2000.....	58
Table 5.4:	Group training completions in the skilled trades and related occupations, 1995–2000.....	59
Table 5.5:	Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by gender, 1995–2000.....	60
Table 5.6:	Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by age, 2000	61
Table 5.7:	Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by State and Territory, 2000.....	63
Table 5.8:	Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by geographic region, 2000	64
Table 5.9:	Completions by Indigenous apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	65
Table 5.10:	Completions by apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, 1995–2000.....	66
Table 5.11:	Completions by apprentices and trainees with a non-English-speaking background, 1995–2000	67
Table 5.12:	Estimates of completion and attrition rates.....	70
Table 5.13:	Employment outcomes from apprenticeships and traineeships, 1998–2000.....	71

Table 6.1:	1999 group training apprentice and trainee course and qualification enrolments by field of study and qualification of training contract.....	74
Table 6.2:	Apprentices and trainees, and VET students—course and qualification enrolments by field of study, 1999.....	75
Table 6.3:	Apprentices and trainees, and VET students—module and unit of competency enrolments by area of learning, 1999	76
Table 6.4:	Percentage of apprentices and trainees and VET students by number of module and unit of competency enrolments per person, 1999	77
Table 6.5:	Apprentice and trainee module and unit of competency results, 1999.....	78
Table A1:	The number of group training apprentice and trainee commencements, numbers in training and completions, 1995–2000.....	83
Table A2:	The type of employer of commencing apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	84
Table A3:	The type of employer of apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	84
Table A4:	The number of group training apprenticeships and traineeships by occupational group, 1995–2000.....	85
Table A5:	The duration of group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000.....	86
Table A6:	The level of qualifications of group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000.....	86
Table A7:	Full- and part-time group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000 ..	87
Table A8:	The gender of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	87
Table A9:	The age of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	87
Table A10:	The gender and age of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000	88
Table A11:	Highest level of previous education attainment of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000	89
Table A12:	The State or Territory of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000	90
Table A13:	The geographical location of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	90
Table A14:	Indigenous and non-Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	91
Table A15:	Group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, 1995–2000	91
Table A16:	The main languages spoken at home by group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000.....	91
Table A17:	The type of employer of completing apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000	92
Table A18:	Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by qualification, 1995–2000.....	92
Table A19:	Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by occupation, 1995–2000.....	93
Table A20:	Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by gender, 1995–2000.....	94
Table A21:	Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by age, 1995–2000... ..	94
Table A22:	The highest level of previous education attainment of completing group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000	95
Table A23:	Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by State and Territory, 1995–2000.....	96
Table A24:	Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by geographic location, 1995–2000	97
Table A25:	Indigenous and non-Indigenous group training apprentice and trainee completions, 1995–2000.....	97
Table A26:	Completing group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, 1995–2000.....	98
Table A27:	The main languages spoken at home by completing group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000	98

Figures

Figure 1:	Group training apprenticeships and traineeships training activity, June 1995–2000.....	10
Figure 2.1:	Apprentices and trainees employed by group training as a percentage of all apprentices and trainees in Australia	18

Figure 3.1: Group training apprenticeships and traineeships training activity, June 1995–2000.....	24
Figure 3.2: Distribution of apprentices and trainees by employer type, June 1995–2000.....	26
Figure 3.3: Growth rates for apprentices and trainees, June 1995–2000.....	26
Figure 3.4: Size of group training companies, June 2000.....	27
Figure 3.5: Location of employers, June 2000.....	27
Figure 3.6: Size of group training host employers, 1996.....	28
Figure 3.7: Number of group training apprentices and trainees employed by group training host employers, 1996.....	28
Figure 3.8: Changes in the importance of major occupational groups in group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000.....	29
Figure 3.9: Duration of group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000.....	35
Figure 3.10: Growth in full- and part-time group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000.....	37
Figure 3.11: Growth of school-based group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000.....	37
Figure 4.1: Differences in the types of group training apprenticeships and traineeships undertaken by males and females, June 2000.....	39
Figure 4.2: Growth in group training apprentices and trainees in each age group, June 1995–2000.....	42
Figure 4.3: Proportion of group training apprentices and trainees in each State and Territory, June 1995 and 2000.....	44
Figure 4.4: Proportion of group training apprentices and trainees in each geographic region of Australia, June 1995–2000.....	46
Figure 4.5: Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees by major employer type, 1995–2000.....	47
Figure 4.6: Indigenous and non-Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees by occupation and qualification, June 2000.....	48
Figure 4.7: Apprentices and trainees reporting a disability by major employer type, June 1995–2000.....	49
Figure 4.8: Group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability and not reporting a disability by occupation and qualification, June 2000.....	50
Figure 4.9: Apprentices and trainees of English and non-English-speaking backgrounds by occupation and qualification, June 2000.....	52
Figure 5.1: Number of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions, 1995–2000.....	54
Figure 5.2: Growth rates for group training apprenticeship and traineeship numbers in training and completions, 1995–2000.....	55
Figure 5.3: Proportions of group training completions by AQF qualification, 1995 and 2000.....	57
Figure 5.4: Growth of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by major occupational group, 1995–2000.....	59
Figure 5.5: Growth in group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions in the clerical, sales and service occupations.....	60
Figure 5.6: Growth in the number of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by age, 1995–2000.....	62
Figure 5.7: Group training completions by highest previous educational attainment, 1995–2000.....	62
Figure 5.8: Growth in the number of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by geographic region, 1995–2000.....	64
Figure 5.9: Growth in the number of Indigenous apprenticeship and traineeship completions by major employer type, 1995–2000.....	65
Figure 5.10: Growth in the number of completions of apprentices and trainees reporting a disability by major employer type, 1995–2000.....	66
Figure 5.11: Ratios of trainee completions to commencements one year earlier by major employer type, March 1995 to June 1997.....	68
Figure 6.1: Percentage of apprentices and trainees and VET students, by hours of training undertaken per person, 1999.....	77

Acknowledgements

The bulk of this report was prepared by David John of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research. Other contributors were Jessie Borthwick, Andy Smith, Susan Dawe and Axel Bender.

The knowledge and expertise of Josie Misko from NCVER and Jeff Priday from Group Training Australia are greatly appreciated, particularly in relation to their assistance in preparing the historical background and development of group training in Australia.

Much of the statistical information used in this report was compiled by Tracy Davey and Hon Kok Fai from NCVER, and the contributions of Matthew Hardy and Katrina Ball in draft preparation are appreciated.

Finally, thanks must go to Tracey Jackson, Penelope Curtin, Toni Cavallaro, Sara Wilson, Nena Bierbaum and Eleanor Woods for their tireless efforts in presentation, layout, proofing and editing of the report.

Executive summary

Introduction

This report has been prepared by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) as a contribution to the National Review of Group Training being led by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).

It looks at the development of group training from its beginnings among industry associations, most notably the Metals Trade Industries' Association (now the Australian Industry Group), through its expansion with the support of the combined industry parties in the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)–Lend Lease Foundation and later, the Commonwealth Government.

The report examines patterns of growth in group training in terms of its occupational mix, the structure and type of training, who participates, what they do and what they gain from it at the end. In so doing, it shows group training to be a strong and enduring contributor to Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system.

Key findings

Group training companies are making a strong contribution to Australia's apprentice and trainee system, particularly for small- and medium-sized employers and teenage apprentices and trainees. In particular:

- ❖ group training apprentice and trainee numbers have doubled over the period 1995 to 2000
- ❖ over the same period, group training companies increased their market share by 1%, a considerable achievement considering this occurred during a period of rapid growth in the sector as a whole
- ❖ host employers serviced by group training companies are overwhelmingly small- or medium-sized businesses (90%)
- ❖ overall, group training apprentices and trainees are more concentrated in the traditional trades than are apprentices and trainees. The length and level of training reflects this with most group training apprentices and trainees being in contracts of training of more than three years
- ❖ Group training companies have the largest proportion of teenage apprentices and trainees of all major employer types and account for almost half of school-based apprenticeships
- ❖ completions in group training companies have grown at a higher rate than among apprentices and trainees overall
- ❖ job outcomes from group training apprenticeships and traineeships are high and comparable with job outcomes from apprenticeships and traineeships in general

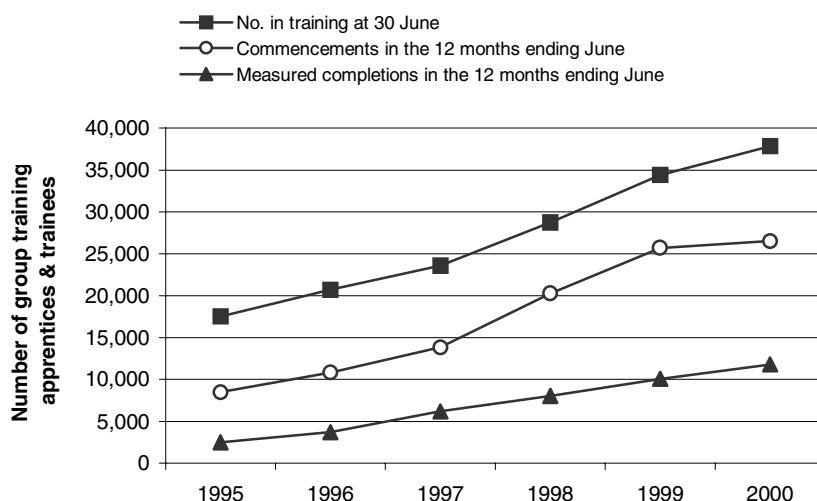
The growth of group training in Australia

Group training has experienced rapid growth in recent years, with the total number of apprentices and trainees employed by group training companies increasing from just over 17 000 in 1995 to almost 38 000 in June 2000—a growth of more than 115% in only five years (see figure 1).

This growth has been fuelled by particularly strong growth in group training commencements. However, growth in group training commencements slowed in the 12 months ending June 2000, implying that the high levels seen in recent years for group training apprentices and trainees is unlikely to continue (figure 1).

The number of group training apprentice and trainee completions reported has also grown strongly, from just over 2000 in 1995 to almost 12 000 for the 12 months ending June 2000 (figure 1). This represents an annual rate of growth of more than 36%, far exceeding the rate of growth of just under 21% for total completions over the same period.

Figure 1: Group training apprenticeships and traineeships training activity, June 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Since 1995, group training's market share of apprentices and trainees has grown more than all of the major employer types, from 12.9% of all apprentices and trainees in 1995 to 13.6% in 2000. Growth for group training exceeded the growth for all apprentices and trainees for all years over the period 1995 to 2000 except for 1999. Group training is the second largest employer group of apprentices and trainees, employing almost 14% of all apprentices and trainees in Australia.

Employer size

Group training companies are used almost exclusively by small firms, although group training companies are large employers in their own right. Group Training Australia's 1996 survey of host employers found that host employers tended to be 'small' or 'medium'-sized businesses, with almost 90% employing 50 people or less and over half employing five people or less. Only 6% of host employers had an employment size greater than 100.

The occupational base

In 1995, 90% of group training apprentices and trainees were employed in trade-related occupations. By 2000, this proportion had fallen to 62%, still higher than the rate for apprenticeships overall (around 50%).

The growth of apprentice and trainee numbers into other occupational groups has meant that the dominance of the traditional skilled trades in the group training system has waned. While the general apprenticeship and traineeship system has been moving much more into line with the structure of employment across the entire Australian labour market, group training has not done so at the same rate. Hence, there is still scope for group training to further expand into other areas of the labour market.

The structure of training

Apprenticeships and traineeships undertaken through group training schemes display a similar distribution in contract duration to that for all apprenticeships and traineeships, with the majority being over three years' duration and a significant proportion being of one year or less. However, the proportion of contracts over three years' duration is almost 10% higher for group training than for all apprentices and trainees. Group training also has the highest proportion of long-term contracts of all major employer types.

Almost three-quarters (72%) of group training apprentices and trainees undertake training at Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) certificate III, a further 1% at certificate IV, diploma, or advanced diploma levels, and 26% at AQF certificate II, while AQF certificate I is an insignificant element of the group training system. While these proportions are similar to those for all apprentices and trainees, there is a higher proportion of AQF II certificate apprentices and trainees within group training than in the entire apprentice and trainee population.

There has been a noticeable increase in part-time¹ apprenticeships for group training in recent years, with numbers rising from only 350 in 1995 to almost 5000 in 2000.

Group training now accounts for almost half of all school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, a significant proportion considering it accounts for less than 14% of all apprenticeships and traineeships. Numbers within group training companies have grown from less than 100 in the mid 1990s to almost 3000 by 2000.

Characteristics of group training apprentices and trainees

The number of female apprentices and trainees in group training has increased markedly from around 2000 in 1995 to almost 9000 in 2000. This has resulted in their share increasing from 13.1% of group training apprenticeships and traineeships in 1995 to 23.1% by 2000. However, the proportion of female apprentices and trainees for group training is less than that for all apprenticeships and traineeships. This can be explained by the greater dominance of traditional trades and related occupations within group training.

The most striking difference between the age profiles for group training apprentices and trainees and the entire apprentice and trainee population occurs for teenagers. The proportion of group training apprentices and trainees who are teenagers actually increased from 53% in 1995 to 55% in 2000. In particular, there has been noticeable growth since the introduction of new apprenticeships.

¹ The use of part-time programs was one of several key indicators of the Group Training Expansion Programme introduced in 1996.

The proportion of group training apprentices and trainees who are Indigenous is well above that for all apprentices and trainees. As for all apprentices and trainees, the number of Indigenous apprentices and trainees involved in group training has increased markedly since the mid 1990s. This growth has resulted in the proportion of group training Indigenous apprentices and trainees rising from 1.5% in 1995 to 3.4% in 2000.

Group training has been the most successful of all programs in advancing the cause of apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities for people reporting a disability. The growth within group training has been dramatic, with numbers increasing nine-fold from just over 100 (or 0.8% of apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies) in 1995 to almost 1300 (or 3.3%) in 2000.

The numbers of apprentices and trainees of non-English-speaking background employed with group training companies have also increased significantly since the mid 1990s, from less than 400 in 1995 to over 1400 in 2000. As a result, the proportion of group training apprentices and trainees who are of non-English-speaking backgrounds has risen from 2.2% in 1995 to 3.8% in 2000. This compares with just over 7% of all apprentices and trainees.

The location of group training apprentices and trainees

The relative share of Australia's total apprentices and trainees employed by group training companies varies across States and Territories. The share of total apprentices and trainees employed by group training companies is lower than the national level in South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. On the other hand, group training in Western Australia, Queensland, the Northern Territory and Tasmania has relatively higher shares than the national equivalent.

The proportion of group training apprentices and trainees living in rural areas or remote areas is proportionately higher than that for the entire apprenticeship and traineeship population.

Off-the-job training undertaken

The major part of an apprentice's or trainee's training takes place in the environment of their workplace; however, they also undertake vocational education and training (VET) away from the workplace. In this provider-based training, the focus of learning is broader and, by and large, theory-based.

Based on information available for 1999, provider-based training undertaken by group training apprentices and trainees is very similar in its basic characteristics to that undertaken by all apprentices and trainees as a whole. This indicates that group training apprentices and trainees have the same off-the-job training opportunities as all apprentices and trainees in general.

Completion and attrition

Apprentice and trainee completions from group training employers have grown at a greater rate than have any other major employer types since the mid 1990s. This growth is reflected within group training, where the total number of apprenticeship and traineeship completions since 1995 has increased markedly, from 2500 in 1995 to almost 12 000 by 2000.

Analysis of a cohort of apprentices and trainees from their commencement to known completion or non-completion indicated that attrition within group training appears to be of a level similar to that for all apprentices and trainees. With a large number of apprentices and trainees reaching their anticipated completion date and no final status being recorded, it is difficult to derive rates of attrition with any certainty.

Outcomes from group training

Employment outcomes from general apprenticeships and traineeships are very good, with around 90% of those completing their apprenticeship or traineeship being retained by their employer or finding employment with a new employer in an unsubsidised job three months after completing their apprenticeship or traineeship. Although lower (around 70%), employment outcomes of people not finishing their apprenticeship or traineeship are also reasonably good. Employment outcomes for group training apprentices and trainees appear to be comparable with those for apprentices and trainees in general.

Conclusion

The enduring strength of group training is its capacity to continue to grow and attract customers, its support for small- and medium-sized companies, its responsiveness to government and its capacity to create opportunities for some groups who might normally be less successful in gaining apprenticeships. Its record of achievement in terms of completions and outcomes is a testament to the capacity and quality of the program.

Nevertheless, some of these strengths are subject to emerging pressures as the apprentice and trainee system continues to change and expand.

These include the need to:

- ❖ diversify to new and emerging occupations
- ❖ maintain a focus on small- and medium-sized firms given the growth of these firms
- ❖ continue to provide opportunities to different groups in the community

1 Introduction

Group training has been a key feature of the landscape in the Australian apprenticeship and traineeship system for more than two decades. During that time, it has grown from a base of some 360 to around 2400 in the mid 1980s to some 38 000 in June 2000. The growth of group training has kept pace with the rapid growth in the system overall in the last three years, retaining at its heart support for the traditional trade groups and smaller and medium-sized firms which first gave rise to group training.

Group training's contribution to growth is particularly important in the role it plays in giving opportunities to specific groups in the community, including young people, Indigenous apprentices and trainees and people with a disability. It is this mandate which has strengthened the value of group training at a time of market diversification and expansion. So too, has been its continuing commitment to young people. Despite the 'niche' that group training occupies, it has nevertheless increased its market share by one percentage point—no mean feat at a time of rapid change and growth in an increasingly volatile environment.

This report looks at the development of group training from its beginnings among industry associations, most notably the Metals Trade Industries' Association (now the Australian Industry Group), through its expansion with the support of the combined industry parties in the ACTU–Lend Lease Foundation and later, the Commonwealth Government.

It examines patterns of growth in group training in terms of its occupational mix, the structure and type of training, who participates, what they do and what they gain from it at the end. In so doing, it shows group training to be a strong and enduring contributor to Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system. In particular, the report finds:

- ❖ group training apprentice and trainee numbers have doubled over the period 1995 to 2000
- ❖ over the same period, group training companies increased their market share by 1%, a considerable achievement considering this occurred during a period of rapid growth in the sector as a whole
- ❖ host employers serviced by group training companies are overwhelmingly small- or medium-sized businesses (90%)
- ❖ group training apprentices and trainees are concentrated in the traditional trades more than apprentices and trainees overall; the length and level of training reflects this with most in contracts of more than three years
- ❖ group training companies have the largest proportion of teenage apprentices and trainees of all major employer types and account for almost half of school-based apprenticeships
- ❖ completions in group training companies have grown at a higher rate than among apprentices and trainees overall

The report concludes with an examination of a number of issues which group training may wish to address in future.

Most of the apprentice and trainee statistics used in this report have been drawn from information available in the National Centre for Vocational Education Research's (NCVER)

March 2001 apprentice and trainee data collection. Detailed statistics on group training are provided in appendix 2.

This report has been prepared as a contribution to the National Review of Group Training in Australia being led by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).

2 Development of group training in Australia

Early development, 1970–1985

Evolving from the apprentice training workshops of the Metal Trades Industry Association in the 1960s, and largely in response to the needs of small businesses, the concept of group training was developed in the 1970s by industry associations in the building and automotive sectors (Beattie 1968). In these sectors, with the growth of subcontracting and specialisation, small employers were often unable to employ apprentices for the full term of the apprenticeship. The concept was to create a company which would recruit and employ apprentices, and place them with one or more host employers for the duration of their training. The first formal group training scheme was the Master Builders' Association Group Training Scheme in Canberra, established in 1979 (Misko 1997). In New South Wales, the Metal Trades Industry Association Group Training Scheme also started in 1979 with 70 apprentices. These early schemes were quickly followed by other industry-based group training schemes, such as those catering to the automotive industry and by regional schemes such as those established in Albury/Wodonga, Townsville and the Hunter Valley (Quinn 1998).

Group training companies generally received income through Commonwealth incentive payments, such as the National Apprenticeship Assistance Scheme established in 1973, replaced in 1977 by the Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-time Training (CRAFT) and through charge-out rates to host employers (Harris et al. 1998). As the formal employers of apprentices and trainees, group training companies were responsible for their wages, annual leave, sick leave, WorkCover costs and superannuation benefits. They were also responsible for arranging their off-the-job and on-the-job training and experience. Group training also proved to be an effective mechanism for placing the increasing number of out-of-trade apprentices whose employers were adversely affected by the economic downturn in the early 1980s.

Group training grew slowly at first. In 1981, fewer than 100 apprentices were employed by group training companies in Queensland, such as Townsville Regional Group Apprentices Scheme (TORGAS), and only 360 were employed nationally (Quinn 1998). However, the availability of funding encouraged the growth of group training schemes. In 1981, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)–Lend Lease Foundation was established with trustees from three national unions—Building Workers', Electrical Trades' and Amalgamated Metalworkers' and Shipwrights'—and three corporations—Lend Lease, Civic and Civic, and Elevators Pty Ltd (ACTU–LLF 2000)—to encourage the employment of young people. The foundation resolved at its second meeting in 1981 to develop a community-based model to slow the exodus of young people from rural communities and to use the community identity and pride to set up a group training scheme. The foundation promoted the development of schemes in three New South Wales regions. The Bathurst–Orange group scheme started in 1982 with 27 apprentices in its first year (Central West Group Apprentices employed 907 in 1999). The group apprenticeship scheme in Macarthur district (Campbelltown) and the Albury–Wodonga Group Scheme started in 1982 (ACTU–LLF 2000).

The foundation assisted the growth of group training by promoting the concept and facilitating the establishment of new companies. The foundation managed many group

training company feasibility studies with the aid of seed money. This pioneering work resulted in the formation of many new group training companies across the length and breadth of Australia. In the early days, the foundation was guarantor of many group training company bank overdrafts and met the cost of down-time of many apprentices during the first two years of the existence of a number of group training companies (Quinn 1998).

In 1981, the Group Apprenticeship Scheme was established, and the Commonwealth Government and State Governments jointly agreed to fund the administrative costs of group training schemes and provided support and encouragement for their establishment. This was the beginning of the Joint Policy funding which requires State Governments to match the funds provided by the Commonwealth Government (through ANTA). Governments in Australia recognised the potential of group training arrangements to reduce skill shortages, by utilising the training capacity of sub-contractors and small employers.

The Hunter Valley Training Company (HVTC) in New South Wales was established in 1981 to assist with training for the NSW Power Industries Building Program. In 1985 it established Illawara Group Training and in 1987 North Coast Group Training, Coffs Harbour and Metro Skills Training, Sydney, as well as Maitland Skill Enhancement Centre (HVTC web site).

As well as the HVTC in New South Wales, an increasing number of group training companies were established in other regions of Australia to serve the needs of local communities; for example, Bundaberg Area Community Apprenticeship and Training Scheme Ltd and Cairns Region Group Training Ltd in Queensland. In Victoria, Sunraysia and Murray Group Training Inc was established in 1983 and Ballarat Group Training Inc in 1986. Such regional companies employed apprentices and trainees across a range of trades and occupations. As well as providing pastoral care for the apprentices and trainees, group training companies in regional areas provide support for employers as well as a community service.

In 1984, prompted by growing public concern over youth unemployment, the Commonwealth Government established a national committee of inquiry under the chair of Mr Peter Kirby. The centrepiece of the committee's report (Kirby 1985) was the recommendation to establish a system of traineeships providing a combination of off- and on-the-job training for those who did not secure a place in the apprenticeship system.

Growth of group training, 1986–1995

As figure 2.1 shows, the numbers of apprentices (and now trainees) in group training schemes grew very quickly. By 1986, numbers had risen seven-fold in five years to a national figure of 2400. One year later, in 1987, group training had grown by some 126% to 5425 (Quinn 1998). The Australian Traineeship System (ATS) was introduced in late 1986. However, growth in the numbers of trainees was slow for the first few years, and this is reflected in the number of trainees in group training schemes.

This growth in group training reflected the significant national growth in the numbers of apprentices and trainees over the period 1986–1990. Numbers increased from 131 000 in 1986 to 172 000 in 1990—an increase of 35% in just five years. This large increase was mainly the result of the improving economic situation in the late 1980s (NCVER 2001a) and is reflected in the increased percentage of apprentices employed by group training companies (figure 2.1).

In 1987, the first group training scheme was established in the grazing industry—the Northern Cattle Traineeships Inc, now called Rural Industry Training and Extension Inc (RITE). Early in 2000 its 1000th trainee was employed (ACTU–LLF 2000).

The growth of group training in the late 1980s is reflected by the attendance at the 1990 National Group Training Conference, titled *Group training 2000*, which brought together over 150 group training representatives from around Australia and one from New Zealand. At this time there were about 90 group training schemes operating throughout Australia, offering employment and training to around 10 000 apprentices and 1000 trainees. Participation in

schemes grew by 40% in 1989 (Murphy 1990). Group training schemes accounted for 5.4% of apprentices and 7.3% of ATS trainees in Australia.

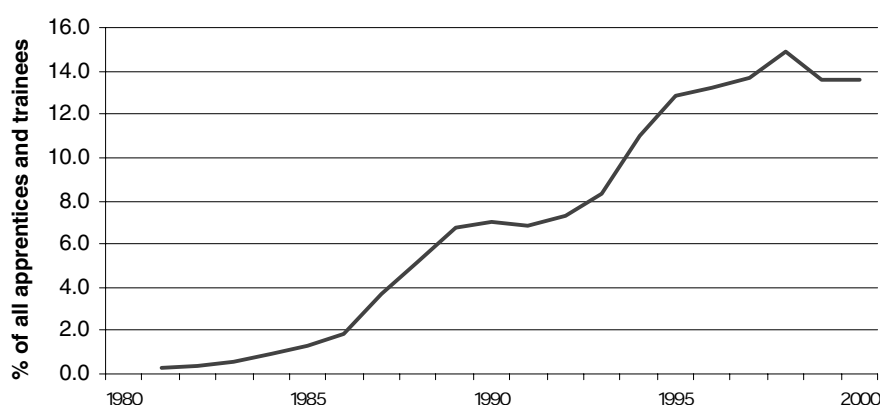
In 1991, Group Training Australia Ltd was established, as the national association for a network of not-for-profit group training companies, to ensure that group training remained at the leading edge of skills development of Australia's workforce. Originally there were around 100 affiliated companies in Group Training Australia Ltd and around 11 000 apprentices/trainees.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training in its 1991 report, *Skills training for 21st century*, recommended that the Commonwealth Government continue its funding support of group training schemes. This committee was not convinced that all group training schemes were able to become self-sufficient. It considered that while reforms were taking place in the entry-level training system, group training had the opportunity to make an even more important contribution to the development of a skilled Australia.

Despite the impact of the recession of the early 1990s on apprentice and trainee intakes (NCVER 2001a), group training companies were able to hold on to their numbers of employed apprentices and trainees through this recession, as reflected in figure 2.1. As existing host employers shed staff, the group training companies were able to find new host employers for apprentices and trainees.

Government ministers decided to phase out recurrent funding to group training companies from 1992. It was argued that the intention of the funding had been short term and the schemes would become self-sufficient as industry-based training programs increased (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training 1991). In anticipation of reduced funding, the foundation commissioned the Dusseldorp Skills Forum (Sweet & Hoskins 1989) to evaluate the effectiveness of group training in Australia and identify areas needing improvement. The ACTU-Lend Lease Foundation developed a strategy to trigger organisational and management improvements in group training companies, especially improving the quality of training, increasing self-sufficiency and introducing new approaches for priority groups such as women.

Figure 2.1: Apprentices and trainees employed by group training as a percentage of all apprentices and trainees in Australia



Group training, 1995–present

The importance of group training companies as employers of apprentices and trainees greatly increased in the mid-to-late 1990s, as indicated in figure 2.1. The period from 1995 has witnessed the fastest period of growth in apprentice and trainee numbers in the history of the

apprenticeship system (NCVER 2001a). During this period, numbers in training grew from 136 000 to around 300 000—more than doubling in six years. Numbers in group training schemes also doubled during this time from around 17 000 in 1995 to almost 38 000 in 2000. By 2000 there were over 120 member companies in Group Training Australia (GTA), which they believe represents about 80% of all apprentices and trainees employed by group training organisations.

An important development in group training has been the establishment of retail skills centres as operating subsidiaries of a number of group training companies. A concept of ACTU–Lend Lease Foundation, this was the beginning of a nationwide network of retail skills centres established in the mid 1990s, mostly operating in large regional shopping complexes and opening up careers in the industry for mature-age and long-term unemployed people as well as younger trainees (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training 1995). The first three retail skills centres were opened in New South Wales at Penrith, Bankstown and Campbelltown. By August 1994 there were eight established: the original three as well as Erina in New South Wales; Cairns in Queensland; Hobart and Launceston in Tasmania; and Maribynong in Victoria (ACTU–LLF 2000).

In 1996, the new coalition Federal Government moved to combine apprenticeships and traineeships into 'new apprenticeships'. To ensure consistency with proposals for the reformed system, a public consultation was conducted by ANTA and the State and Territory Governments (ANTA 1997b). In February 1997, ANTA released for public consultation, *Taking care of business: Growth through group training—Issues paper*, to assist in formulation of principles which should underpin the growth in group training arrangements.

The Federal Government's objective was to expand the size of the overall system, including group training, and ongoing employer involvement in structured entry-level training. By 1996 there were 100 group training schemes which received operational support grants under the Joint Policy (ANTA 1997b).

Following the public consultations conducted by ANTA and State and Territory Governments, national principles for group training were prepared by ANTA for ministers. In May 1997, ministers agreed to the set of national principles for group training to facilitate expansion as part of achieving the goal of new apprenticeships (ANTA 1997a). This marked a shift from public support, in the form of operational grants to government-purchasing arrangements based on outcomes in core activities.

Currently there are 182 group training organisations operating nationally (ANTA 2001). This is the total number registered by the State and Territory authorities. Those organisations which have multiple sites within a State or Territory are counted only once. However, where the organisation has established an office in another State or Territory it has been counted in the State or Territory in which it operates. The network of companies collectively employs around 38 000 apprentices and trainees, or 14% of the national total, making it the largest employer of apprentices and trainees in Australia. Most group training companies are reasonably large, with more than 50% employing over 100 employees—only 20% of group training companies employ 20 employees or less. Group training companies are currently working with more than 35 000 host employers and around 90% of these have less than 50 employees. GTA research also indicates that over 50% of group training's host employers are small- and micro-businesses employing fewer than five employees. Many of these businesses would not be involved in employment-based training if it were not for the services provided by group training (GTA 2000).

In general, group training companies are innovative organisations able to respond quickly and flexibly to the needs of enterprises, industries or communities (GTA 2000). However, some group training companies have grown considerably since the early 1980s. For example, Hunter Valley Training Company now has three skill enhancement centres, ten regional offices and provides rural and remote access through their Skills Express program of mobile classroom delivery.

Sunraysia Murray Group Training (SMGT), based in Mildura, commenced operations in 1983, and in the late 1990s was widely regarded as a 'best practice' group training company with award-winning apprentices and trainees. In 1999, it opened the Sunraysia Skills Centre and also began the first vocational training program for Indigenous school students with the Koori Open Door Education Campus. Strongly supported by the local community, SMGT had, in 1999, 400 apprentices and trainees across a range of industries, including retail, hospitality, plumbing, engineering, electrical, horticulture, gardening, cooking, carpentry, security, office administration, bricklaying, transport and cabinet-making (ACTU-LLF 2000).

About half of the group training companies in Australia are broad-based and the other half industry-specific. Broad-based group training companies predominate in rural and regional areas, while the industry-specific companies are found in metropolitan areas.

What core services are provided?

The core activity of group training companies is managing the employment and training of apprentices and trainees, including:

- *arranging and monitoring the on- and off-the-job training*
- *acting as consultants and trouble-shooters for both host employers and apprentices or trainees throughout the entire period of employment and training*
- *arranging rotations to broaden training opportunities*
- *arranging alternative work placements when required*
- *counselling and caring for apprentices and trainees*

Group training companies often form strong connections with their communities. Whether industry-specific or regional in focus, they are usually involved in more than just the core function of placing young people into positions with host employers. Since the introduction of VET-in-Schools programs most group training companies are very involved with schools, providing career advice or co-ordinating work placements or providing employment for school-based apprentices and trainees.

... most [group training companies] are now involved with schools in anything from providing careers advice to students, to managing and co-ordinating work placements for the increasing numbers of students undertaking vocational courses in years 11-12, to employing students as school based apprentices and trainees. Their involvement in creating pathways from school to work for young people places them at the forefront of efforts by governments to improve school to work transitions for young people (GTA 2000, p.6)

Many group training companies provide community services using the skills and manpower of their apprentices and trainees. This might involve assisting the elderly or disabled with repairs and maintenance to their homes or project work in local clubs, parks and gardens. They also work closely with local councils, business chambers, and welfare organisations to enhance the lives of members of those communities.

In addition to the convenience and flexibility they provide to host employers, GTCs [group training companies] also provide their apprentices and trainees with pastoral care at a critical time of their lives. Not only does the GTC field officer manage the training function and resolve conflict that might arise in the workplace, he or she may also find themselves dealing with personal crises as diverse as:

- *homelessness*
- *suicide*
- *drug addiction; and*
- *relationship problems*

(GTA 2000, p.7)

Summary

Emerging in the 1970s as a response to skills shortages in small businesses which could not afford to employ apprentices in their own right, group training companies have expanded to become a major feature of the Australian apprenticeship and traineeship system. They now employ almost 38 000 apprentices and trainees and account for 14% of total numbers in the system.

Group training grew slowly in its early years but developed quickly in the wake of government funding in the 1980s designed to encourage the growth of group training companies to help alleviate the problem of high and persistent unemployment amongst young people. The financial support of the ACTU–Lend Lease Foundation was critical in the development of group training companies, and latterly the activities of Group Training Australia has led to establishment of group training as a permanent institution in the apprenticeship and traineeship system.

Unprecedented growth in the numbers of apprentices and trainees since the mid 1990s has also fuelled the growth of group training in recent years. During the 1990s, as many companies realised the benefits of sharing the risks of apprentice training with an intermediary organisation such as group training, group training companies also began to work with larger employers.

Group training companies are an institution in entry-level training in Australia and are likely to remain so in the foreseeable future.

A number of reports and reviews have been published in recent years on group training. These are listed in appendix 1.

MILESTONES

1979: First group training schemes established by Master Builders' Association and Metal Trades Industry Association.

1981: ACTU–Lend Lease Foundation promotes the concept of group training companies and facilitates the establishment of new schemes.

1981: The Commonwealth Government and State Governments establish Joint Policy funding of operating costs of not-for-profit group training schemes.

1982: First national gathering of ten group training and skills formation companies.

1985: Australian Traineeship System introduced to provide trainees for industries without a tradition of apprenticeships. This followed from the recommendation in the report of the National Inquiry into Labour Market Programs chaired by Kirby (1985).

1990: National group training conference *Group training 2000*. Over 150 group training company representatives attend and adopt the 'Townsville communiqué', which outlines the goals for further expansion and development of group training in the 1990s.

1991: Group Training Australia Ltd founded as a national association of around 100 group training companies.

1991: Ministers decided to phase out recurrent funding to group training companies. This resulted in new strategy for group training companies to improve and expand business activities.

1991: House of Representatives Committee on Employment and Training report, *Skills training for 21st century*, supports funding group training companies' operating costs for core activity.

1995: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, *A best kept secret: Report on the role and effectiveness of group training companies*, supported performance-based funding to group training schemes from July 1995. Committee recommended funding for skill centres, particularly for group training companies in regional locations, and the drafting of performance guidelines for group training companies.

1996: ANTA Ministerial Council agreed to a series of reforms to the apprenticeship and traineeship system as proposed by the Industry Reference Group on Modern Apprenticeship and Traineeship Scheme (MAATS). Group training recognised as critical to achieving these reforms. The incoming Howard Government combined apprenticeships and traineeships under the title 'new apprenticeships'.

1997: Issues paper entitled *Taking care of business: Growth through group training* circulated. Public consultation forums conducted by ANTA and State and Territory governments on behalf of ANTA Board Advisory Committee on New Apprenticeships. Outcomes reflected in the report, *National principles for group training*, in particular endorsing an increase in Commonwealth Government and State/Territory Government funding for expansion of group training from 1996–2000. Evaluation study report by Mathers (2000).

1998: Introduction of new apprenticeships; user choice introduced for funding mechanism for apprenticeships and traineeships. Implication for group training companies is that they can also be funded to deliver training if they obtain Registered Training Organisations (RTO) status (a number have skill centres already). Other large employers are also registering as RTOs.

3 Structure of group training apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia

The past decade has witnessed the most significant changes ever experienced in the development of the apprenticeship and traineeship system in Australia; for example, the abolition of age restrictions for entry to apprenticeships and traineeships and the belated roll-out of traineeships since the early-to-mid 1990s.

Even more profound changes have occurred in the past three years with the integration of apprenticeships and traineeships into the single 'new apprenticeships' system, which commenced on 1 January 1998.

NCVER (2001a) examined the impact of these changes on the importance and structure of Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system.

In this chapter, the impact of such changes on the structure of group training is considered in relation to the numbers of group training apprenticeships and traineeships.²

The growth of group training in Australia

Since the mid 1990s, Australian apprenticeships and traineeships have experienced by far the biggest wave of growth in their history (NCVER 2001a). During this time, total apprentice and trainee numbers increased from just under 136 000 in 1995 to reach 278 000 in June 2000, a growth of over 100% in five years. This growth was particularly rapid after the advent of new apprenticeships in 1998.

This growth was fuelled by even more rapid growth in the number of commencements during this period, which increased from around 60 000 in 1995 to just under 198 000 in the 12 months ending June 2000. Measured completions have also grown very strongly in the five years to June 2000, rising from just under 33 000 for the 12 months ending June 1995 to almost 84 000 in the 12 months ending June 2000.

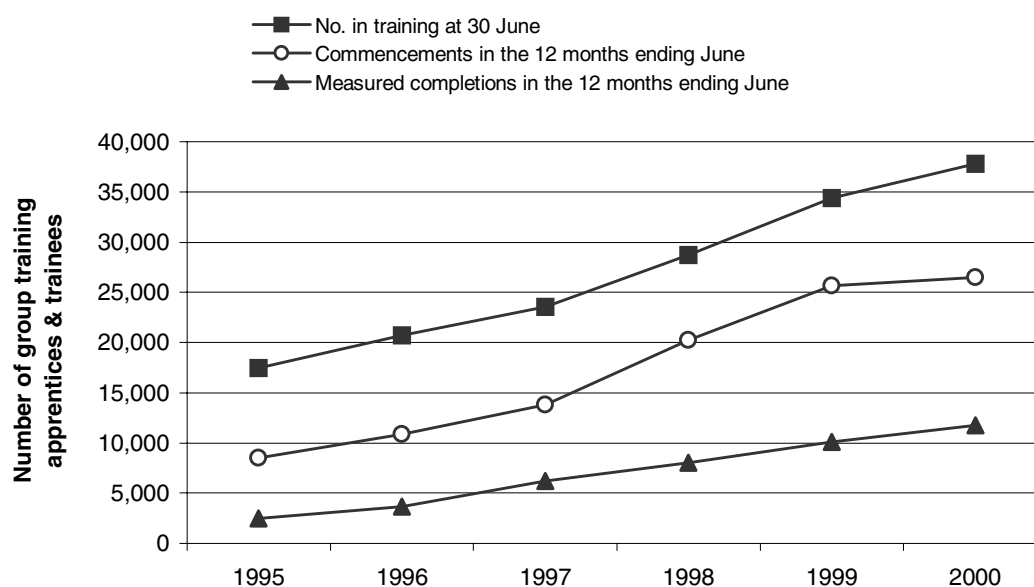
A similar trend of rapid growth has been experienced for group training apprenticeships and traineeships since the mid 1990s. The total number of apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies increased from just over 17 000 in 1995 to almost 38 000 in June 2000, a growth of well over 100% in only five years (figure 3.1).

As for total apprenticeships and traineeships, the rapid growth in group training numbers in recent years has been fuelled by particularly strong growth in group training commencements. Apprentice and trainee commencements for group training have risen from just over 8000 in the 12 months to June 1995 to well over 26 000 for the 12 months ending June 2000. It should be noted, however, that the growth in group training commencements slowed in the 12 months ending June 2000, implying that the high levels of growth seen in recent years for group training apprentices and trainees is unlikely to continue (figure 3.1).

² The analysis in this and the subsequent chapter is based on numbers of apprentices and trainees in training within the group training sector.

In terms of measured completions, the number of completing group training apprentices and trainees has also grown strongly in recent times, from just under 2500 in 1995 to almost 12 000 for the 12 months ending June 2000 (figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Group training apprenticeships and traineeships training activity, June 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

There are three major employer groups employing apprentices and trainees—private sector employers, the various levels of government in the private sector and group training. The vast majority (over 80%) of all apprentices and trainees in Australia are employed by the private sector. Group training is the second largest employer type, employing almost 14% of all apprentices and trainees, while the entire public sector employs less than 6% (table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Type of employer of apprentices and trainees, June 2000

Employer type	Number of apprentices and trainees ('000)	Proportion of total (%)
Private sector	224.3	80.6
Group training	37.8	13.6
Commonwealth Government	1.4	0.5
State Government	8.9	3.2
Other government*	5.0	1.8
Total	278.1	100.0

* Other government includes local government and government business enterprises

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The primary goal of the New Apprenticeships Through Group Training Expansion Programme, established as part of the 1996 Commonwealth budget (Kemp 1996), was to increase the number of apprentice and trainee positions in group training companies over a four-year period to 2000.

Over the period 1995 to 2000, all major employer types, with the exception of the Commonwealth Government, showed growth in terms of numbers of apprentices and

trainees employed with them (table 3.2). The number of group training apprenticeships and traineeships more than doubled, from under 18 000 in 1995 to almost 38 000 in 2000.

In terms of annual rates of growth, group training experienced the greatest growth of all major employer types, increasing their apprentice and trainee numbers at an annual rate of almost 17%. This compares with an annual rate of growth of just over 15% for all apprentices and trainees over the same period.

Table 3.2: Number of employed apprentices and trainees by employer type, June 1995–2000

	1995 (‘000)	1996 (‘000)	1997 (‘000)	1998 (‘000)	1999 (‘000)	2000 (‘000)	Annual growth rate* 1995 to 2000
Private sector	109.3	125.7	137.9	152.8	202.6	224.3	15.5
Group training	17.5	20.7	23.6	28.7	34.4	37.8	16.7
Commonwealth Government	2.2	2.6	2.3	1.7	1.3	1.4	-8.1
State Government	4.5	4.7	4.8	6.3	9.2	8.9	14.8
Other government**	2.4	2.7	3.2	3.1	5.0	5.0	16.1
<i>Sub total Government</i>	<i>9.0</i>	<i>10.0</i>	<i>10.3</i>	<i>11.1</i>	<i>15.5</i>	<i>15.4</i>	<i>11.2</i>
Employer type not known	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.6	-
Total	135.9	156.5	171.9	192.9	252.8	278.1	15.4

* Annual rates of growth shown are compound rates of growth

** Other government includes local government and government business enterprises

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

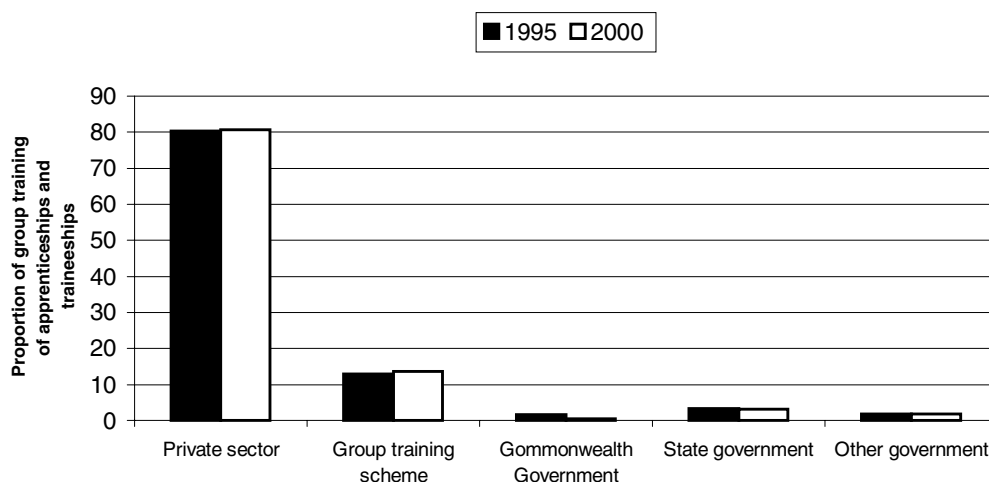
In broad terms, the proportional distribution of apprenticeships and traineeships for major employer types has remained much the same since 1995 (figure 3.2). However, group training’s market share of apprentices and trainees has grown the most, in terms of percentage points, from 12.9% of all apprentices and trainees in 1995 to 13.6% in 2000. While the private sector marginally increased its share from 80.4% in 1995 to 80.6% in 2000, there has been a notable decline in the importance of the public sector, particularly in relation to the Commonwealth Government which now employs less than 1% of all apprentices and trainees in Australia. On the other hand, there has been an increase in the number of apprentices and trainees employed by government business enterprises.³

Figure 3.3 compares the annual growth for apprentices and trainees employed with group training and all apprentices and trainees. Group training exceeded the growth for all apprentices and trainees for all years over the period 1995 to 2000 except for 1998 to 1999. While the growth in group training apprentice and trainee numbers appears to be slowing, its numbers continue to rise at a rate higher than that for all apprentices and trainees in general.

Considering that growth for group training occurred during a period of high growth for the sector in general, group training has performed well to increase marginally its market share, highlighting its importance as an employer of apprentices and trainees in Australia.

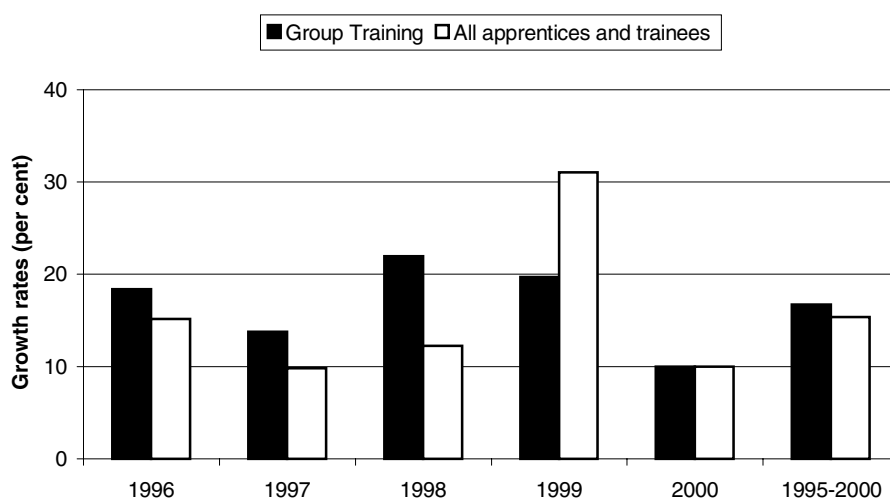
³ Toner (1998) points out that the decline in importance of public sector apprenticeships and traineeships has been partly the result of the break-up and privatisation of government assets such as utilities, which were traditionally large employers of apprentices.

Figure 3.2: Distribution of apprentices and trainees by employer type, June 1995–2000



Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Figure 3.3: Growth rates for apprentices and trainees, June 1995–2000



Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

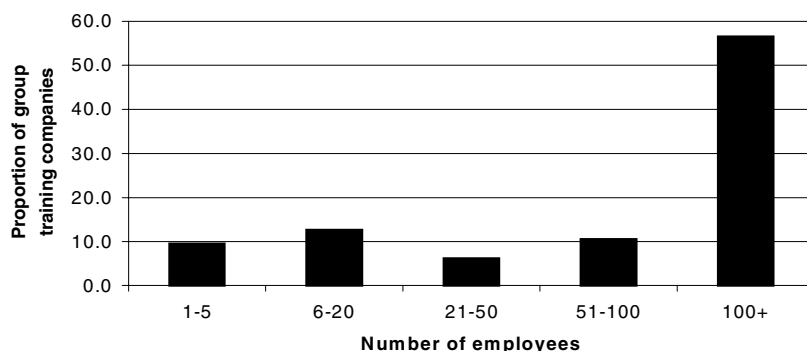
Group training companies and host employers

Group training has a unique niche in Australia’s apprenticeship and traineeship system. As noted in the second chapter, it began in the late 1970s as a response to the needs of small employers who were unable to commit or afford a full four-year indenture for an apprentice. Group training allowed such employers the opportunity to take on an apprentice knowing that the apprentice could be rotated to another employer if work was no longer available. The rotation of apprentices and trainees is a unique feature of the group training structure. Group training companies employ the apprentice and/or trainee, arrange all aspects of their off-the-job training, and arrange their placement with a host employer at a fraction of the cost that the employer would normally have to pay.

According to various State/Territory group training associations, there are almost 200 group training companies currently employing apprentices and trainees in Australia. This number has risen from around 100 in the mid 1990s. According to NCVER’s national data collection,

the vast majority of group training companies are large. Of those providing their employment size, almost 60% stated they had more than 100 employees. Around 20% stated they had 20 employees or less (figure 3.4).

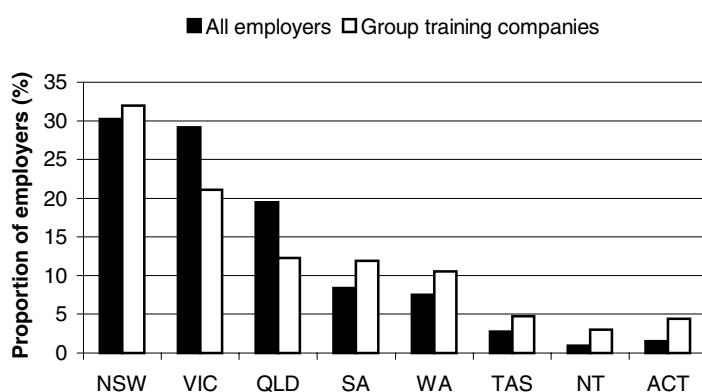
Figure 3.4: Size of group training companies, June 2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Figure 3.5 compares the geographic distribution of group training companies with that of all apprentice and trainee employers. Host employers are, of course, not included in this employer population as they do not actually employ the apprentice or trainee.

Figure 3.5: Location of employers, June 2000

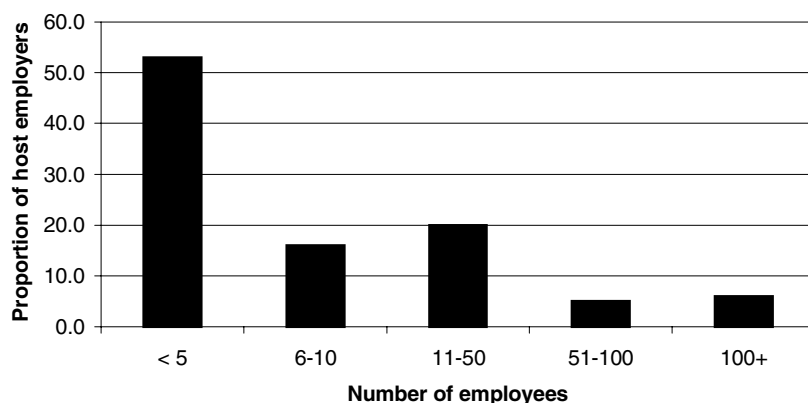


Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The 1996 survey of host employers (GTA 1996) provided valuable information about host employers in relation to their employment size and the number of apprentices and trainees hosted by them. It was found that host employers tended to be 'small' or 'medium'-sized businesses, with almost 90% employing 50 people or less and over half employing five people or less. Only 6% of host employers had an employment size greater than 100 (figure 3.6).

In terms of the number of apprentices and trainees taken on by host employers, the survey found that 70% of host employers host only one apprentice or trainee, with a further 16% hosting two. Only 5% of all the host employers surveyed took on six or more apprentices and/or trainees (figure 3.7).

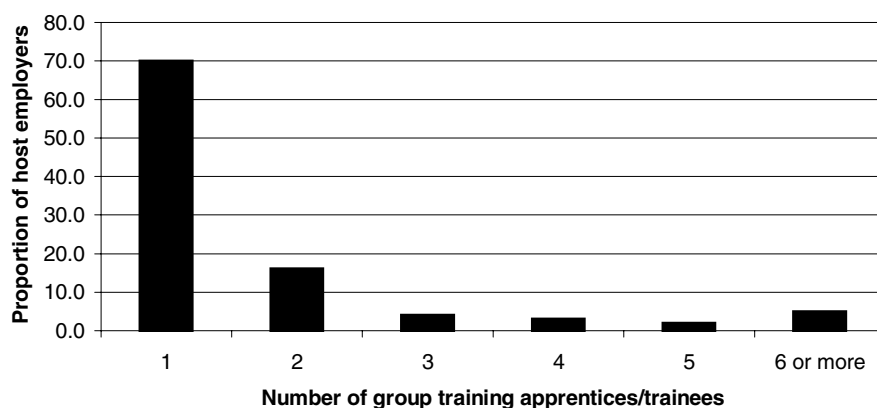
Figure 3.6: Size of group training host employers, 1996



Source: GTA 1996

While indications are that most host employers are small in terms of employees, concrete information pertaining to host employers is limited since Group Training Australia's survey in 1996. Clearly more up-to-date information would be advantageous for research and policy reasons and would enable a clearer picture of host employers today. Originally, most of group training's activity involved placements with small businesses. However, the use of group training companies as an alternative to direct employment of apprentices and trainees by larger business is not uncommon and indications are that such practices are becoming the norm rather than the exception in some industries. One example is the electrotechnology industry, where research just completed indicated that larger electrotechnology firms are more likely to take an apprentice or trainee through a group training company than smaller firms are (NCVER 2001b).

Figure 3.7: Number of group training apprentices and trainees employed by group training host employers, 1996



Source: GTA 1996

Through the National Research and Evaluation Committee (NREC), NCVER is currently managing two research projects relating to group training. These research projects will include an analysis of the literature, a survey of group training companies as well as case studies. They are expected to be completed by mid 2002.

Occupational base of group training

Traditionally, apprenticeships were concentrated in the skilled trades and related occupations, which make up around 14% of all jobs in Australia. Those in group training were no different, focussing on a very narrow range of occupations including building, construction and motor trades. This can be partly explained by the fact that few industries outside the skilled trades provided structured entry-level training which was typical of Australia's apprenticeship system in general.

The introduction of traineeships in the 1980s was an attempt to broaden the coverage of contracts of training beyond the trades to other sectors of the labour market. Unfortunately, its introduction did little to change the dominance of the apprenticeship and traineeship system by the traditional skilled trades. By the end of 1994, the trades still dominated, accounting for around 90% of all apprenticeships and traineeships. A similar pattern occurred for group training, where more than 90% of its apprentices and trainees were employed in trades and related occupations.

This situation changed dramatically over the last half of the 1990s. In 1995, nearly 90% of all apprenticeships and traineeships were in the skilled trades and the trade-related occupations in the labour market. By 2000, this proportion had declined to less than 49%, with growth occurring in most other major occupational groups.

Group training has followed a similar trend, with 90% of its apprentices and trainees employed in trade-related occupations in 1995 but with the proportion falling to 62% by 2000 (figure 3.8).

Between 1995 and 2000, there was strong growth in the number of group training apprenticeships and traineeships in the clerical, sales and service occupations. Increasing numbers in these occupations has seen their share of all group training apprentices and trainees increase from less than 8% in 1995 to almost 22% by 2000.

Figure 3.8: Changes in the importance of major occupational groups in group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Labourers and related occupations also grew as an avenue of employment for group training apprentices and trainees. By 2000, the proportion of group training apprentices and trainees in such occupations reached 7%, rising from around 2% in 1995.

There was also growth, from very low bases, in the proportion of group training apprentices and trainees in managers and administrators, professionals and associate professional occupations. From only 2% in 1995, the relative share has increased to more than 6% in 2000.

Although small in terms of numbers, growth in numbers in the intermediate production and transport occupations pushed up their share of group training apprentices and trainees to around 2% in 2000.

Thus the growth of apprentice and trainee numbers in other occupational groups means the dominance of the traditional skilled trades in the group training system has waned. However, with more than 62% of all group training contracts, the skilled trades and related occupations remain the major focus of group training apprentices and trainees.

A more detailed breakdown of the change in the occupational structure of group training apprenticeships and traineeships since 1995 is given in table 3.3.

In 1995, the top six group training apprenticeship and traineeship occupational categories, in terms of overall numbers in training, were construction tradespersons (32% of all apprentices and trainees), food tradespersons (14.1%), automotive tradespersons (12.3%), electrical and electronics tradespersons (11.6%), mechanical and fabrication engineering tradespersons (11.5%) and intermediate clerical workers (4.1%). Most of these were in the traditional skilled trades and related areas, which is not surprising considering skilled trades and related occupations accounted for over 90% of group training apprenticeships and traineeships in 1995.

By 2000, the top six were construction tradespersons (20.6%), electrical and electronics tradespersons (10.4%), automotive tradespersons (10.2%), intermediate clerical workers (8.9%), food tradespersons (8.4%), and mechanical and fabrication engineering tradespersons (8.1%). In other words, the exact same occupational areas, although their order and relative shares have changed. While the 'top 6' made up 85% of all group training apprentices and trainees in 1995, they accounted for less than 70% in 2000.

This drop reflects the extent to which group training has broadened its occupational base in recent years. While we have seen that group training has expanded into other occupational groups, the skilled trades and related occupations clearly remain the driving force behind group training.

This is further highlighted in table 3.4 which shows the top ten specific occupations in group training in 2000 compared with those in 1995.

In 1995 the top ten specific occupations in the group training system were all in traditional trades and related occupations except for general clerks. These top ten accounted for almost 73% of the total number of apprentices and trainees employed with group training in 1995.

By 2000, the top ten's proportion of group training apprenticeships and traineeships accounted for only 56%. This decline is consistent with that seen in the general apprentice and trainee population (NCVER 2001a). It is also worth noting that only three 'new' occupations emerged into the top ten for group training. In fact, only one occupation, sales assistants, joined this 'elite' group from outside the skilled trades and it was ranked 13 in 1995. As a result, eight of the top ten apprenticeship and traineeship occupations for group training are in skilled trades and related areas. This compares with only five out of the top ten for the entire apprenticeship and traineeship system.

Table 3.3: Occupational mix of apprenticeships and traineeships employed under group training schemes, 1995–2000

ASCO codes	Occupational group	Number of group training apprentices and trainees in training at 30 June ('000)			Proportion of total (%)		
		1995	1997	2000	1995	1997	2000
Managerial & professional							
1	Managers and administrators	230	630	730	1.3	2.7	1.9
2	Professionals	90	70	600	0.5	0.3	1.6
3	Associate professionals	40	380	1 070	0.2	1.6	2.8
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>360</i>	<i>1 070</i>	<i>2 410</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>4.5</i>	<i>6.4</i>
Trades & related occupations							
41	Mechanical & fabrication engineering tradespersons	2 020	2 790	3 070	11.5	11.9	8.1
42	Automotive tradespersons	2 160	2 550	3 870	12.3	10.8	10.2
43	Electrical & electronics tradespersons	2 030	2 970	3 920	11.6	12.6	10.4
44	Construction tradespersons	5 600	5 280	7 790	32.0	22.4	20.6
45	Food tradespersons	2 460	2 750	3 160	14.1	11.7	8.4
46	Skilled agricultural & horticultural workers	460	470	620	2.6	2.0	1.6
491	Printing tradespersons	40	50	80	0.2	0.2	0.2
493	Hairdressers	60	50	180	0.4	0.2	0.5
	Other miscellaneous tradespersons & related workers	590	610	950	3.4	2.6	2.5
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>15 410</i>	<i>17 520</i>	<i>23 650</i>	<i>88.2</i>	<i>74.4</i>	<i>62.5</i>
Clerical, sales & service workers							
5	Advanced clerical & service workers	(a)	30	20	0.0	0.1	0.1
61	Intermediate clerical workers	720	1 340	3 380	4.1	5.7	8.9
62	Intermediate sales & related workers	100	770	620	0.5	3.3	1.6
63	Intermediate service workers	260	600	2 130	1.5	2.6	5.6
81	Elementary clerical workers	(a)	0	220	0.0	0.0	0.6
82	Elementary sales workers	300	770	1 840	1.7	3.3	4.9
83	Elementary service workers	0	0	80	0.0	0.0	0.2
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>1 370</i>	<i>3 510</i>	<i>8 290</i>	<i>7.8</i>	<i>14.9</i>	<i>21.9</i>
Intermediate, production & transport workers							
71/72	Intermediate plant & machine operators	20	50	160	0.1	0.2	0.4
73	Road & rail transport drivers	(a)	0	(a)	0.0	0.0	0.0
79	Other intermediate workers	20	150	510	0.1	0.6	1.4
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>680</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>1.8</i>

Table 3.3: Occupational mix of apprenticeships and traineeships employed under group training schemes, 1995–2000 (cont.)

ASCO codes	Occupational group	Number of group training apprentices and trainees in training at 30 June ('000)			Proportion of total (%)		
		1995	1997	2000	1995	1997	2000
Labourers & related workers							
91	Cleaners	0	10	210	0.0	0.0	0.5
92	Factory labourers	100	300	720	0.6	1.3	1.9
99	Other labourers & related workers	200	950	1870	1.2	4.0	4.9
	<i>Sub total</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>1260</i>	<i>2800</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>5.3</i>	<i>7.4</i>
Total all apprentices & trainees		17 490	23 550	37 820	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) represents figures between one and nine inclusive

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table 3.4: Top ten group training apprenticeship and traineeship occupations, 1995 and 2000

Apprenticeships and traineeships in 1995			Apprenticeships and traineeships in 2000			
Occupation	Proportion of all apprenticeships & traineeships (%)	Rank	Occupation	Proportion of all apprenticeships & traineeships (%)	Rank	Rank in 1995
Carpentry and joinery tradespersons	18.2	1	Carpentry and joinery tradespersons	11.2	1	1
Cooks	13.3	2	General clerks	8.5	2	7
Motor mechanics	9.7	3	Motor mechanics	8.3	3	3
Electricians	9.6	4	Electricians	8.0	4	4
Plumbers	6.0	5	Cooks	7.4	5	2
Metal fitters and machinists	4.6	6	Sales assistants	3.5	6	13
General clerks	3.7	7	Plumbers	3.0	7	5
Painters and decorators	2.9	8	Structural construction tradespersons NFD	2.3	8	15
Cabinet-makers	2.4	9	Painters and decorators	2.0	9	8
Structural steel and welding tradespersons	2.3	10	Fabrication engineering tradespersons NFD	1.8	10	16
Total	72.7			56.0		

NFD = not further defined

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

This suggests that although group training has broadened its occupational base, it has been far slower in expanding outside its traditional trade base than the sector in general. Nevertheless, people entering a contractual training agreement with a group training

company have a much greater choice of occupation today than they did at any time in the past.

While the general apprenticeship and traineeship system has been moving much more into line with the structure of employment across the entire Australian labour market, group training has not done so at the same rate.

Comparing the proportion of apprentices and trainees in major occupational groups for group training with those for all apprentices and trainees in general, the proportions for all apprentices and trainees generally reflect the distribution of jobs in Australia more realistically than does group training. For instance, while 30% of all apprentices and trainees are employed in the clerical, sales and service occupations, a figure close to 32% of all jobs, these occupations only make up 22% of group training apprenticeships and traineeships. Similarly, while 5% of all apprenticeships and traineeships are employed in production and transport occupations, less than 2% are for group training. However, such occupations account for around 9% of the workforce (table 3.5).

The obvious exceptions to this are managers, administrators, and professional occupations where group training has a higher-than-average proportion compared with their relative share of the labour market. However, none of these occupational groups are significant in terms of actual numbers, and given that the main avenue for gaining qualifications for managerial and professional occupations tends to be from universities, it is unlikely the apprenticeship and traineeship sector is likely to make large in-roads into this market.

Table 3.5: Employed group training apprentices and trainees, and all employed persons, by occupation, June 2000

Occupational group	Number employed ('000)			Proportion of total (%)		
	Group training apprentices and trainees	All apprentices and trainees	All employed persons	Group training apprentices and trainees	All apprentices and trainees	All employed persons
Managers & administrators	0.7	2.8	634.4	1.9	1.0	7.0
Professionals	0.6	2.3	1 645.4	1.6	0.8	18.3
Associate professionals	1.1	8.6	1 013.2	2.8	3.1	11.2
Tradespersons & related workers	23.6	134.8	1 202.5	62.5	48.5	13.6
Clerical, sales & service workers	8.3	83.5	2 842.5	21.9	30.0	31.5
Intermediate production & transport workers	0.7	13.8	802.6	1.8	5.0	8.9
Labourers & related workers	2.8	32.2	875.9	7.4	11.6	9.7
Total	37.8	278.1	9 016.5	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS 2000b; NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

While the analysis indicates that group training has been slow to expand outside its traditional trade base, this is also a positive feature. As indicated in the previous chapter, group training remained afloat during the recession in the early 1990s, primarily as a result of its strong base in the trades. However, there is clearly scope for group training to further expand into other areas of the labour market, in particular, emerging service industries such as tourism, information technology and communications.

Intensity and level of training undertaken

Another major change in the structure of apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia has been an opening-up of the system to the full range of Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications and to more flexible training programs of varying lengths.

Prior to the mid 1990s, apprenticeship training in the traditional trades at the trade certificate level (equivalent to AQF certificate III) dominated the system. These apprenticeships were usually undertaken over a four-year period. Traineeships at that time were mostly of one year's duration at the equivalent of AQF certificate II.

This situation has changed markedly since the mid 1990s. Less than half of all apprentices and trainees are in contracts of training of over three years' duration, while those of one year or less now make up around one-quarter.

Apprenticeships and traineeships under group training display a similar distribution in contract duration to that for all apprenticeships and traineeships, with the majority being over three years' duration and a significant proportion being of one year or less (table 3.6). The most notable difference is the higher proportion of longer duration contracts associated with group training, with the proportion of contracts over three years' duration being almost 10% higher for group training than for all apprentices and trainees. In fact, group training has the highest proportion of long-term contracts of all the major employer types. This is to be expected when one considers that group training has maintained a strong trade focus.

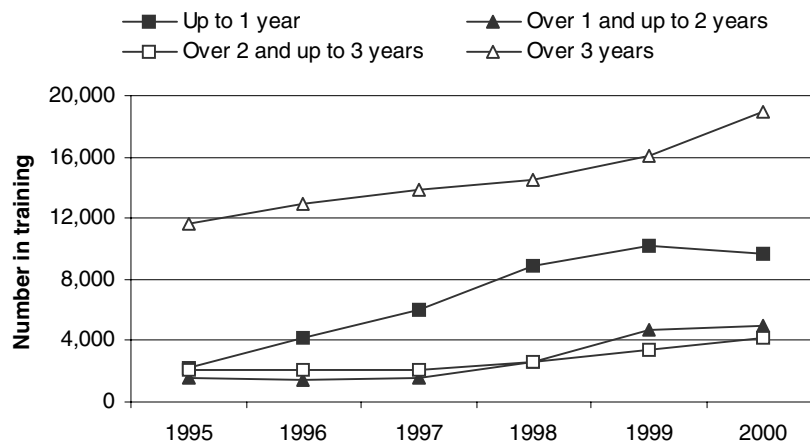
Table 3.6: Duration of apprenticeships and traineeships, June 2000

Contract duration	Group training		All apprentices and trainees	
	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)
1 year or less	9.7	25.6	61.1	22.0
Over 1 year and up to and including 2 years	4.9	13.1	57.7	20.8
Over 2 years and up to and including 3 years	4.2	11.2	47.2	17.0
Over 3 years and up to and including 4 years	17.7	46.8	107.7	38.7
Over 4 years	1.3	3.3	4.3	1.5
Total	37.8	100.0	278.1	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Changes in the duration of group training contracts of training since the mid 1990s are shown in figure 3.9. Group training apprenticeships and traineeships of over three years' duration grew steadily from 1995 to 1998, followed by more rapid growth over the past two years. The numbers of people in contracts of training of between one and three years' duration grew strongly between 1997 and 1999, followed by slower growth in 2000. While contracts of one year or less grew rapidly from 1995 to 1999, there has been a decline in their growth during 2000. These trends are commensurate with those for the entire apprenticeship and traineeship sector.

Figure 3.9: Duration of group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The increasing numbers of part-time apprentices and trainees has an effect on the apparent duration of training, with most part-time apprenticeships and traineeships being of more than one year's duration and ranging up to three years. This must be taken into account when considering apprentices and trainees by duration of training, since it can no longer be assumed that longer contracts are always equivalent to a traditional apprenticeship. Trends in part-time apprenticeships and traineeships are discussed later in the chapter.

In terms of the qualifications being sought by apprentices and trainees employed by group training companies, 72% are undertaking training at AQF certificate III, with a further 1% at certificate IV, diploma, or advanced diploma levels. Some 26% are at AQF certificate II, while programs at the AQF certificate I are an insignificant element of the group training system (table 3.7). While these proportions are similar to those for total apprentices and trainees, it is interesting to note there is a higher proportion of AQF certificate II apprentices and trainees within group training than in the entire apprentice and trainee population. This is a little surprising considering the greater proportion of trades and related occupations.

Table 3.7: Qualifications being sought by apprentices and trainees, June 2000

AQF qualification	Group training		All apprentices and trainees	
	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)
Certificate I	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Certificate II	10.0	26.4	57.3	20.6
Certificate III	27.2	71.9	208.6	75.0
Certificate IV/diploma/advanced diploma	0.5	1.3	10.6	3.8
Not known	0.1	0.4	1.5	0.5
Total	37.8	100.0	278.1	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

While the proportion of group training apprentices and trainees at certificate III has actually declined from 83% in 1995 to 72% in 2000, the actual numbers at certificate III have almost doubled over the period with an annual growth rate of more than 13%. In fact the rate of growth in group training certificate III contracts over the period 1995 to 2000 is higher than for all apprenticeships and traineeships over the same period (table 3.8).

There has been an eight-fold increase in the number of group training contracts at the certificate II level, from 1200 in 1995 to around 10 000 in 2000 (table 3.8). This growth is commensurate for that seen for all apprenticeships and traineeships.

While there has also been growth in the numbers in certificate IV or higher level programs, their relative importance within group training remains small, with only 500 apprentices and trainees at these levels in 2000. This differs somewhat from the trends found for all apprenticeships and traineeships where AQF certificate IV qualifications have become an increasingly significant feature of the system.

As has been the case for some time, AQF certificate I training is a disappearing and insignificant element of the apprenticeship and traineeship system.

Table 3.8: Growth in AQF qualifications, 1995–2000

	Group training			All apprentices and trainees		
	1995 ('000)	2000 ('000)	Annual growth rate* 1995–2000	1995 ('000)	2000 ('000)	Annual growth rate* 1995–2000
AQF I	0.1	0.0	-27.3	0.6	0.1	-27.3
AQF II	1.2	10.0	51.7	8.8	57.3	45.5
AQF III	14.5	27.2	13.4	114.4	208.6	12.8
AQF IV or higher	0.1	0.5	39.0	0.3	10.6	108.3

* Annual growth rates are compound growth rates

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Emergence of part-time apprenticeships

Traditionally, apprenticeships and traineeships were full time, with the total hours for the on-the-job together with off-the-job training set at the normal weekly hours for the industry or occupation. Although some States provided an option to do an apprenticeship or traineeship part time (that is, total hours of less than 35 per week), this did not become a significant feature of the system until the introduction of new apprenticeships in 1998. Part-time apprenticeships or traineeships typically range from 50% of the normal working week to something approaching, but not reaching, 100%.

Part-time apprenticeships now form a very significant feature of the overall apprenticeship and traineeship system and represent 15.8% of all apprenticeships and traineeships.

The use of part-time programs was one of several key indicators of the group training Expansion Programme introduced in 1996. It is therefore pleasing to see the noticeable increase in part-time apprenticeships for group training, with the proportion of part-time contracts increasing from 2.1% in 1997 to 12.8% by June 2000 (table 3.9).

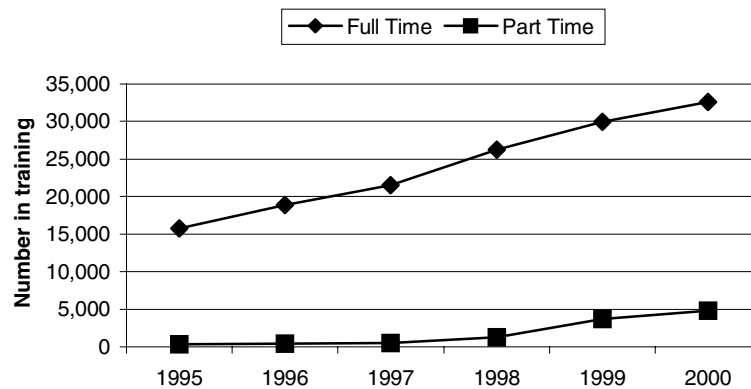
Table 3.9: Full- and part-time apprenticeships and traineeships, June 2000

Mode of apprenticeship or traineeship	Group training		All apprentices and trainees	
	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)
Full time	32.6	86.1	231.8	83.4
Part time	4.8	12.8	43.8	15.8
Mode not known	0.4	1.1	2.4	0.9
Total	37.8	100.0	278.1	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

As seen in figure 3.10, the number of part-time apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies was relatively insignificant from 1995 to 1997, with considerable growth ever since. Part-time numbers have risen from only 350 in 1995 to almost 5000 in 2000. Over the same period the number of full-time apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies has risen from just under 16 000 to over 32 000 in 2000. The observed trend in part-time contracts within group training companies is consistent with that for part-time contracts across all apprenticeships and traineeships.

Figure 3.10: Growth in full- and part-time group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000



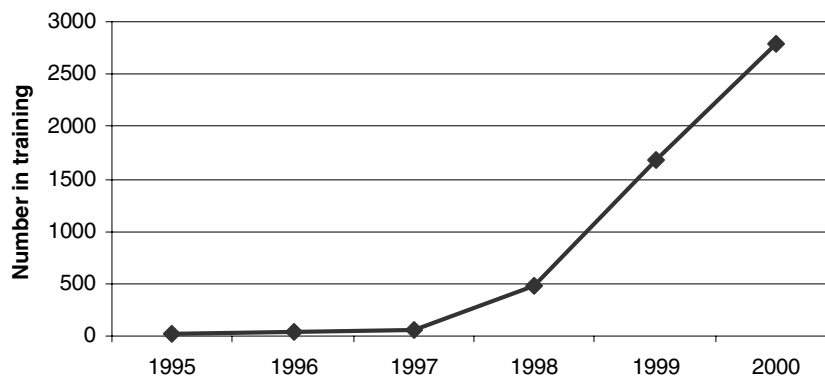
Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Introduction of school-based apprenticeships

Another small, but growing feature of Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system has been the emergence of school-based training.

The number of school-based apprentices and trainees within group training has grown from less than 50 in the mid 1990s to almost 3000 by 2000. As illustrated in figure 3.11, this growth primarily occurred after the introduction of new apprenticeships in 1998. In percentage terms, the proportion of school-based apprentices and trainees in group training has risen from less than 1% of all group training apprenticeships and traineeships in 1995 to just over 7% in 2000. Group training now accounts for almost half of all school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, a quite significant proportion considering that it only makes up 14% of all apprenticeships and traineeships.

Figure 3.11: Growth of school-based group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000



Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

4 Characteristics of group training apprentices and trainees

Age and gender of group training apprentices and trainees

The focus of Australia's apprenticeship system has traditionally been on entry-level training for school leavers, in particular those seeking to enter the skilled trades and related occupations.

The 1984 Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs found that 'females still only comprise about 10% of all apprentices, the vast majority of whom are employed in hairdressing' (Kirby 1985, p.124). At the time, apprentices were all young people, the major proportion being school leavers at the point of entry into apprenticeships.

One of the key reasons for establishing traineeships to complement the apprenticeship system was to diversify the range of occupations covered by contracts of training, partly to ensure that occupations with higher levels of female participation might also be included in the apprenticeship and traineeship system. In addition, age restrictions for entry to apprenticeships and traineeships were lifted in 1992.

The situation described by Kirby had, however, changed very little by the early-to-mid 1990s. For instance, by May 1993, only 12.8% of all apprentices and trainees were female. By the early-to-mid 1990s the introduction of traineeships and a number of attempts by governments to increase the proportion of females entering trades apprenticeships had failed to raise the level of female participation much over their participation levels of the early 1980s.

In terms of the age of apprentices and trainees, almost 90% of first-year apprentices were still teenagers. Almost all of the remainder were in their early twenties. In terms of all apprentices and trainees (that is, first year through to fourth year), 60% were teenagers in 1993. Most of the rest were aged 20 to 24 years, with less than 3% aged 25 years or older.

Since the mid 1990s, there has been a substantial increase in both the absolute numbers of females and the relative proportion of females in the entire apprenticeship and traineeship system and the group training sector, as shown in table 4.1.

The total number of female apprentices and trainees has increased significantly since the mid 1990s, lifting the proportion of female apprentices and trainees from 16.5% in 1995 to 31.5% in 2000.

This situation is reflected in group training, which was traditionally dominated by young males employed in traditional trades and related occupations. Since the mid 1990s, the number of female apprentices and trainees within group training has increased markedly, from around 2000 in 1995 to almost 9000 in 2000. In percentage terms, this represents an increase in the number of females from 13.1% of group training apprenticeships and traineeships in 1995 to 23.1% by 2000 (table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Gender participation in apprenticeships and traineeships, June 1995–2000

Year	Group training				All apprentices and trainees			
	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Number in training ('000)	%	Number in training ('000)	%	Number in training ('000)	%	Number in training ('000)	%
1995	15.2	86.9	2.3	13.1	113.5	83.5	22.5	16.5
1996	17.6	84.9	3.1	15.1	127.2	81.2	29.4	18.8
1997	19.5	82.6	4.1	17.4	134.9	78.5	37.0	21.5
1998	22.7	79.0	6.0	21.0	143.1	74.2	49.8	25.8
1999	26.4	76.9	8.0	23.1	171.9	68.0	80.9	32.0
2000	29.1	76.9	8.8	23.1	190.6	68.5	87.5	31.5

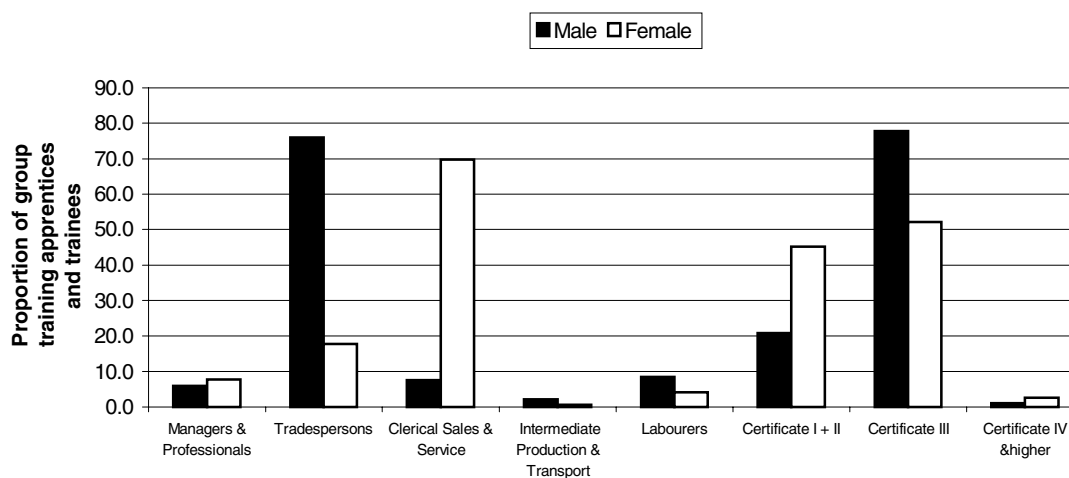
Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Not surprisingly, owing to the greater dominance of traditional trades and related occupations within group training, the proportion of females is less than that for all apprenticeships and traineeships. However, the broadening of the occupational base for group training outside the traditional trades has improved female participation significantly over recent years.

There are some significant differences in the types of apprenticeships and traineeships being undertaken by male and female apprentices and trainees within group training.

For instance, around 70% of females in group training apprenticeships and traineeships are clerical sales and service workers, whereas over 75% of males are tradespersons and related workers (figure 4.1). Females share a slightly higher representation than males in group training apprenticeships and traineeships in the managerial and administrative, professional and associate professional occupations. Males have higher proportions than females in group training intermediate production and transport and labourer occupations. These patterns are similar to the occupational segregation by gender found in the entire Australian apprenticeship and traineeship system.

Figure 4.1: Differences in the types of group training apprenticeships and traineeships undertaken by males and females, June 2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Although there are slightly more females than males in group training apprenticeships and traineeships at AQF certificate IV or higher levels, they are substantially over-represented in group training apprenticeships and traineeships at AQF certificate I & II levels. Moreover, there are proportionately fewer females in group training apprenticeships and traineeships at the certificate III level (figure 4.1). While this profile is similar to that for all apprentices and trainees, there is a far larger gap in the proportion of females at certificate III level within group training than there is for the sector as a whole. This again reiterates the greater dominance of the male trade ‘apprentice’ in the group training network.

The number of apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies has increased for all age groups. However, the increases are not to the same degree as for all apprentices and trainees. For instance, while the proportion of apprentices and trainees aged 40 years or more has increased from less than 1% of all apprentices and trainees in 1995 to over 12% in 2000, the proportion of people aged 40 years or more undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship with a group training company has increased from 0.3% of all group training apprentices and trainees to only 2%. A similar trend can be seen for the 25–39-year age group (table 4.2).

The most striking difference between the age profiles for group training apprentices and trainees and the entire apprentice and trainee population is the proportions of teenagers. While absolute numbers of teenage apprentices and trainees have increased, the impact of removing age restrictions for entry to apprenticeships and traineeships saw the proportion of all apprentices and trainees who are teenagers fall dramatically between 1995 and 2000. By contrast, the proportion of teenage group training apprentices and trainees increased from 53% in 1995 to 55% in 2000. In particular, there has been noticeable growth since the introduction of the new apprenticeships, suggesting group training has been particularly proactive in providing contractual training opportunities for teenagers.

Table 4.2: Age participation in apprenticeships and traineeships, June 1995–2000

Year	Proportion of apprentices and trainees (%) in each age cohort							
	Group training				All apprentices and trainees			
	15–19*	20–24	25–39	40–64	15–19*	20–24	25–39	40–64
1995	53.4	41.7	4.6	0.3	53.6	39.2	6.4	0.8
1996	48.9	43.7	6.5	0.9	48.4	40.6	9.2	1.8
1997	48.6	42.1	7.7	1.6	44.9	39.9	11.9	3.2
1998	50.3	38.3	9.4	2.1	42.6	36.8	14.6	5.9
1999	54.7	34.3	8.8	2.2	37.4	31.5	19.6	11.5
2000	55.4	33.7	8.5	2.5	36.9	29.9	20.6	12.5

* Includes a small number of persons aged less than 15 years

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Differences in the occupations of group training apprentices and trainees are evident across different age groups, as shown in table 4.3.

Some 60% of teenage group training apprentices and trainees are undertaking their apprenticeship or traineeship in skilled trades and related occupations and around a quarter in clerical, sales or service worker occupations. Just over 7% are in labourer and related occupations, and another 7% are in managerial or professional occupations.

The trend for 20–24-year-olds is somewhat similar to that for teenagers; however, the proportion in skilled trades and related occupations is much higher, around 76%. On the other hand, proportions in the other major occupational groups are lower—only 13% in clerical, sales or service worker occupations and 5% and 4% in labourer and related occupations and managerial and professional occupations, respectively.

Different occupational profiles are particularly evident for group training apprentices and trainees who are 40 years or older. Over half (54%) are in clerical, sales and service occupations, while only 12% are in traditional trade-related occupations. A further 18% of group training apprentices and trainees aged 40 years or more are in labourers and related occupations, while just over 11% are in managerial and professional occupations.

Table 4.3: Group training apprentices and trainees by age, occupation and qualification, June 2000

Occupational group	Proportion of apprentices and trainees (%) in each age cohort			
	15–19 years*	20–24 years	25–39 years	40 years or more
Managerial & professional	6.9	4.4	9.6	11.3
Tradespersons	59.4	76.3	43.1	11.7
Clerical, sales & service	24.8	13.2	28.7	53.9
Intermediate production and transport	1.6	1.3	3.7	5.3
Labourers	7.4	4.7	15.0	17.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
AQF qualification	Proportion of apprentices and trainees (%) in each age cohort			
	15–19 years*	20–24 years	25–39 years	40 years or more
Certificate I & II	32.8	14.0	30.0	40.5
Certificate III	66.4	83.7	65.9	54.6
Certificate IV and higher	0.8	1.3	3.8	4.9
Not known	0.0	0.9	0.3	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Includes a small number of persons aged less than 15 years

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

There are also differences across the various age groups in relation to the qualifications being sought by apprentices and trainees employed under group training schemes. As shown in table 4.3, almost 84% of those aged 20–24 years of age were engaged at the certificate III level in 2000, compared with approximately two-thirds of teenagers, two-thirds of those aged 25–39 years, and less than 55% of those aged 40 years or more. This is somewhat different from the profile for all apprentices and trainees, demonstrating that the proportion of apprentices and trainees involved in AQF certificate III or equivalent is roughly the same across all age groups.

The pattern is also different for the 20–24-year age group whereby a large proportion of older group training apprentices and trainees are undertaking certificate II qualifications. It should be remembered that numbers at AQF certificate I qualifications are negligible.

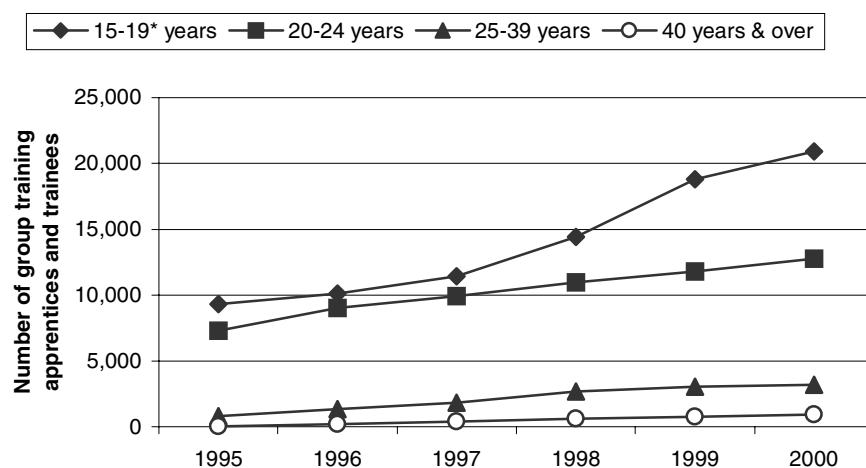
Older people are more likely than young people to be in group training apprenticeships and traineeships at the certificate IV level or higher, a pattern similar to that for all apprentices and trainees in general.

The past decade has seen a major transformation of apprenticeships and traineeships in Australia from a system mainly focussed on school leavers (especially males) to a system increasingly open to females and to people of all age groups. Rather than leading to a decline in training opportunities for young people, this transformation has been achieved with larger numbers of young people participating in the system than at any time previously in Australia.

This trend is reflected in group training—to an even greater extent. While group training apprenticeship and traineeship numbers have grown for all age groups, there has been particularly strong growth in the number of teenage apprentices and trainees. As shown in figure 4.2, the rate of growth for teenage apprentices and trainees employed under a group

training scheme has been high compared with that for older age groups, particularly since the introduction of new apprenticeships in 1998. This suggests group training has concentrated strongly on providing access to contractual training for teenagers rather than for older people. This is explained partly by the continued focus of group training on apprenticeships and traineeships in skilled trades and related areas.

Figure 4.2: Growth in group training apprentices and trainees in each age group, June 1995–2000



* Includes a small number of persons aged less than 15 years
Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Educational background of group training apprentices and trainees

One of the reasons given for the trend of proportionately fewer apprentices and trainees in the 15–19-year age group over the past decade is that more young people are staying on longer at school or are undertaking some other tertiary study prior to entry to apprenticeships.

NCVER (1994) reported that, in 1993, over 75% of first-year apprentices entered their apprenticeships directly after leaving school.

As has always been the case, most apprentices and trainees still enter their training directly from secondary school. However, the proportion with schooling as their highest level of previous educational attainment has fallen from 93% in 1995 to 84% in 2000 (table 4.4).

The proportion of apprenticeships and traineeships and new apprenticeships taken up by people who have a previous tertiary vocational or academic qualification has increased markedly from less than 3% in 1995 to almost 14% today (table 4.4). Most of these hold a trade or other certificate-level qualification. This indicates that more people are finishing school and some other tertiary study before entering an apprenticeship or traineeship.

The situation for group training is similar in that the majority of its apprentices and trainees enter their training directly from secondary school (table 4.4). As for all apprentices and trainees, the proportion of group training apprentices and trainees with secondary schooling as their highest previous educational attainment has declined, from 94% in 1995 to 87% by 2000. While this trend is similar to that for apprentices and trainees in general, the proportion still entering apprenticeships and traineeships directly from school is slightly higher for group training than the general apprentice or trainee. This is undoubtedly due to the larger proportion of teenagers undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships within group training, as noted earlier.

The proportion of group training apprentices and trainees taken up by people who have a previous tertiary qualification or other post-secondary school qualification has increased

significantly, from less than 3% in 1995 to over 10% today (table 4.4). Most of these hold some sort of certificate-level qualification other than a trade.

Table 4.4: Highest educational background of apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Highest level of previous educational attainment	Proportion at 30 June (%)			
	Group training		All apprentices and trainees	
	1995	2000	1995	2000
Degree/postgraduate diploma	0.1	0.5	0.1	1.0
Associate diploma/undergraduate diploma	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.8
Trade/technical certificate	1.1	1.4	1.1	2.6
Other certificate	1.1	5.8	0.9	6.0
Other unspecified post-secondary	0.3	3.0	0.6	3.4
Sub-total tertiary	2.7	10.9	2.8	13.8
Year 12	47.5	38.3	41.8	34.2
Years 10 or 11	44.8	45.0	48.4	43.0
Year 9 or lower	1.7	3.6	2.9	7.0
Sub-total schooling only	94.0	86.9	93.1	84.2
Not known	3.3	2.3	4.0	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Geographic location of group training apprentices and trainees

The total number of apprentices and trainees across Australia is unevenly distributed across States and Territories according to each State and Territory's share of Australia's working-age population. New South Wales, the largest State, has proportionately fewer apprentices and trainees than its population share would suggest it ought to have. Western Australia and the Northern Territory are in a similar position.

On the other hand, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory have higher proportions of apprentices and trainees than their population shares. Only Queensland has apprentice and trainee numbers broadly in line with their population share.

The relative share of Australia's total apprentices and trainees employed by group training companies varies across States and Territories. It can be seen from table 4.5 that, while group training makes up 13.6% of all apprentices and trainees at the national level, the relative share by individual jurisdictions varies considerably. The share of total apprentices and trainees in jurisdictions employed by group training companies is lower than the national level in South Australia (8.6%), Victoria (10.8%), New South Wales (11.4%) and the Australian Capital Territory (13.1%). On the other hand, group training in Western Australia (23.2%), Queensland (20.4%), the Northern Territory (16.0%) and Tasmania (14.5%) has shares relatively higher than the national figure (table 4.5).

This suggests that there is definitely scope for group training to increase its presence in some jurisdictions, in particular South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales.

Table 4.5: Apprentices and trainees in each State and Territory, June 2000

State/Territory	Group training			All apprentices and trainees		
	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)	Share of all apprentices and trainees in State/Territory (%)	Number in training ('000)	Proportion of total (%)	Share of working-age population* (%)
New South Wales	9.1	24.1	11.4	79.6	28.6	33.5
Victoria	8.6	22.7	10.8	79.8	28.7	24.9
Queensland	10.4	27.4	20.4	50.8	18.3	18.7
Western Australia	4.6	12.3	23.2	20.0	7.2	10.0
South Australia	2.6	6.8	8.6	30.1	10.8	7.7
Tasmania	1.5	4.0	14.5	10.4	3.7	2.4
Australian Capital Territory	0.7	1.8	13.1	5.1	1.8	1.1
Northern Territory	0.4	1.0	16.0	2.3	0.8	1.7
Australia	37.8	100.0	13.6	278.1	100.0	100.0

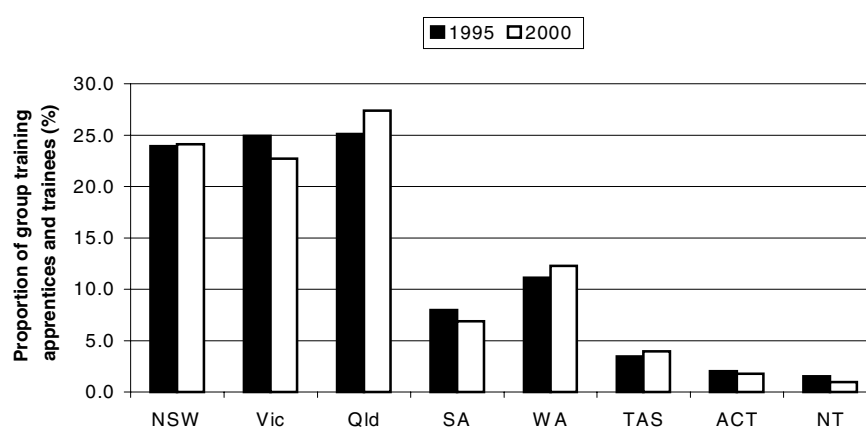
* Based on population aged 15–64 years

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection; ABS 2000a

The change in each State or Territory's share of group training apprenticeships and traineeships since 1995 can be seen in figure 4.3.

Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania increased their share of group training's apprentices and trainees, while Victoria's and South Australia's shares fell. New South Wales, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory all enjoy similar shares today as they did in the mid 1990s (figure 4.3). As a result, Queensland now has the largest share of group training apprentices and trainees (27.4%), while Victoria has been relegated to third highest (22.7%) behind Queensland and New South Wales (24.1%). The Northern Territory's share remains the lowest of all jurisdictions.

Figure 4.3: Proportion of group training apprentices and trainees in each State and Territory, June 1995 and 2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The proportion of group training apprentices and trainees living in rural areas or remote areas is proportionately higher than that for the entire apprenticeship and traineeship population; that is, 40.7% for group training compared with 30.8% for all apprenticeships and traineeships (table 4.6). Considering that rural and remote Australia comprises only 27% of Australia's working-age population, rural and remote areas are being particularly well served by group training.

By contrast, capital cities are not well served by group training. While two-thirds of the Australian working-age population live in capital cities, only 48% of group training apprentices and trainees live in capital cities, which is even less than that for all apprenticeships and traineeships (58.3%).

In other metropolitan areas (of at least 100 000 people but are not capital cities of Australia, a State or a Territory) some 7.5% of Australia's working-age population is found. This compares with 7.6% of all apprenticeships and traineeships and 7.4% of group training apprentices and trainees. As a result, group training's representation in such areas is on a par with that for all apprenticeships and traineeships and the corresponding population share.

Table 4.6: Apprentices and trainees in each geographic region of Australia, June 2000

Geographic region*	Group training			All apprentices and trainees		
	Number in training	Proportion of total (%)	Share of all apprentices and trainees (%)	Number in training	Proportion of total (%)	Share of working-age population** (%)
Capital city	18 050	47.7	11.1	162 210	58.3	65.5
Other metropolitan	2 790	7.4	13.1	21 250	7.6	7.5
Rural	13 120	34.7	16.8	78 090	28.1	24.2
Remote	2 270	6.0	30.6	7 410	2.7	2.8
Total***	37 820	100.0	13.6	278 070	100.0	100.0

* 'Capital city' consists of ABS State/Territory capital city statistical divisions; 'other metropolitan' consists of urban centres with a population greater than 100 000; 'rural' consists of urban centres with a population of 5000 or more, and 'remote' consists of those areas with a population less than 5000

** Population aged 15–64 years

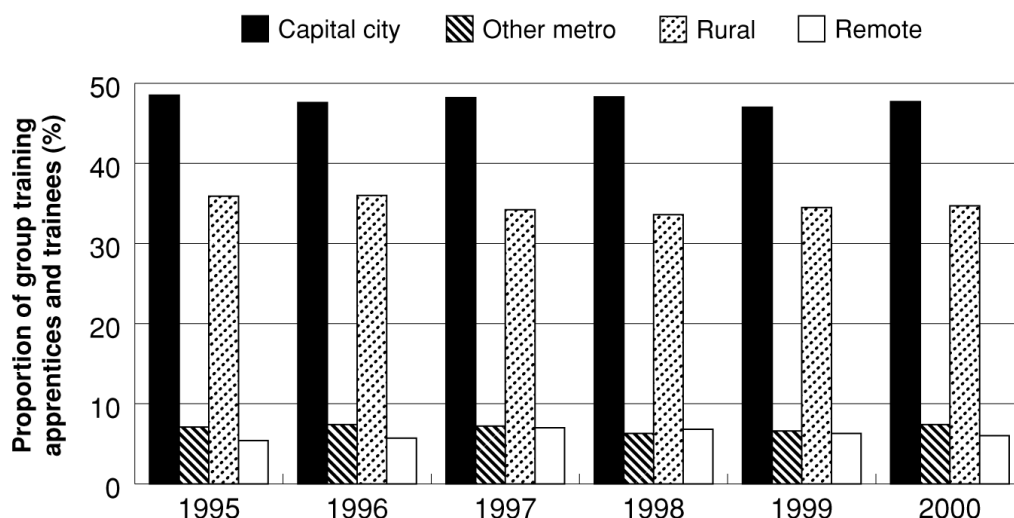
*** Includes outside Australia and unknown location

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection; ABS 2000a

One of the recommendations from the group training growth strategy report was that high priority be given to lifting group training market share in metropolitan areas (GTA 1996). As shown in figure 4.4, this has not happened and there has been very little change in the proportional distribution of the geographical location of group training apprentices and trainees. This is certainly one area which group training needs to target, particularly in those occupational groups where its share lags behind that of the corresponding labour market.

Recent research by Dumbrell, Finnegan and de Montfort (2001) shows that there are, however, substantial geographic variations across Australia in relation to access to apprenticeships, traineeships and new apprenticeships. However, these variations do not occur along strict urban and rural divisions; rather, the significant variations occur within different areas of the same city in the case of large cities, or within particular regional areas. Local employment factors and socio-economic variations within geographic areas are crucial, whereas the rural–urban divide is not.

Figure 4.4: Proportion of group training apprentices and trainees in each geographic region of Australia, June 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Such issues were also highlighted by Mathers (2000) who identified several growth and quality issues in relation to group training, particularly in relation to rural and regional areas. Based on trainee characteristics as well as geographic, industry and occupational areas he identified growth areas which should be targeted. His report recommended that:

the Commonwealth investigate current and planned industry developments in rural and regional areas, as well as known skill shortages. Such information should be included in the guidelines as part of the markets to be targeted in the revised programme. (Recommendation 25)

Growth in Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees

There has been a five-fold increase in the total number of Indigenous apprentices and trainees since the mid 1990s, from only 1100 in 1995 to some 5200 in 2000. The number of Indigenous apprentices and trainees involved in group training has also increased five-fold over this time, from less than 300 in 1995 to almost 1300 in 2000 (table 4.7).

The proportion of Indigenous apprentices and trainees of the total rose strongly from 0.8% in 1995 to reach a peak of 2.4% in 1998. The proportion who are Indigenous fell in 1999 to 1.8% but rose in 2000 to some 1.9%. Within the group training movement, the proportion of Indigenous apprentices and trainees increased from 1.5% in 1995 to a peak of 4.5% in 1998, and has declined since to 3.4% in 2000 (table 4.7).

Despite the fall in the proportion of Indigenous apprentices and trainees since the introduction of new apprenticeships in 1998, their actual number has continued to grow. On the other hand, the number of Indigenous apprentices and trainees involved in group training has marginally declined since 1998. However, the proportion of Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees remains well above that for all apprentices and trainees, and considering that Indigenous peoples made up some 1.9% of Australia's working-age population in 2000, their representation within the group training movement remains very high.

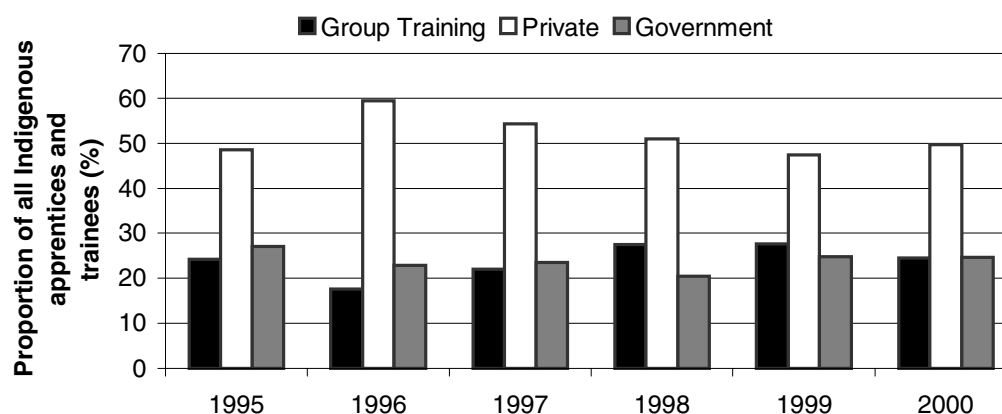
Table 4.7: Indigenous apprentices and trainees, June 1995–2000

Year	Group training			All apprentices and trainees	
	Indigenous peoples			Indigenous peoples	
	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>Proportion of group training apprentices and trainees</i>	<i>Share of all Indigenous apprentices and trainees (%)</i>	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>Proportion of total apprentices and trainees</i>
1995	260	1.5	24.2	1060	0.8
1996	510	2.4	17.7	2860	1.8
1997	830	3.5	22.0	3770	2.2
1998	1290	4.5	27.5	4700	2.4
1999	1250	3.6	27.6	4510	1.8
2000	1270	3.4	24.6	5180	1.9

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

It is also worth noting that around one-quarter of all Indigenous apprentices and trainees are employed with a group training company. This compares with 50% employed with private companies and 25% employed with government-related employers (figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5: Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees by major employer type, 1995–2000



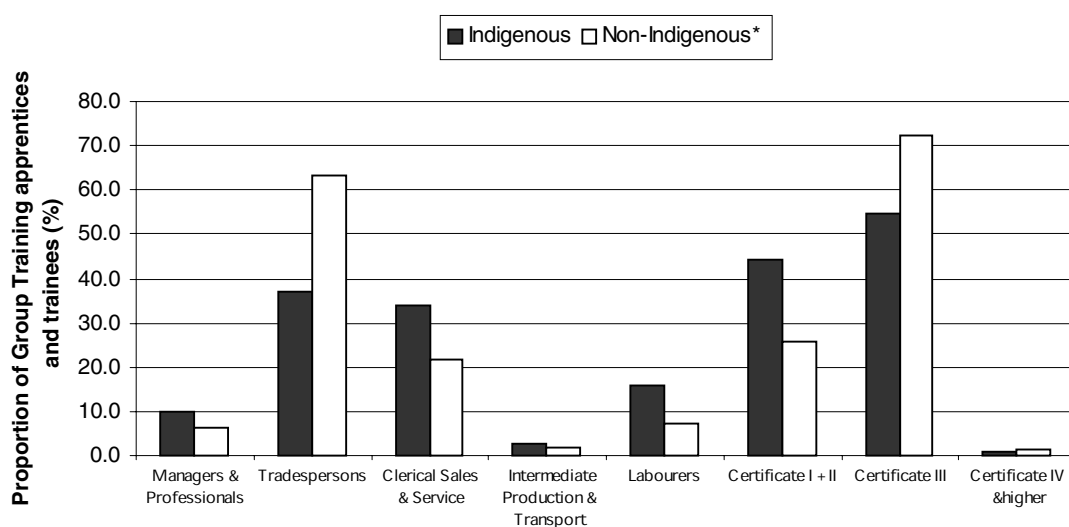
Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

It should be noted that equitable Indigenous access to apprenticeships and traineeships was achieved in 1996, and this situation has continued in Australia to the present. Thus, along with Indigenous participation in the vocational education and training sector overall, Indigenous participation in apprenticeships and traineeships is one of the very few areas where overall Indigenous participation has reached equitable levels with other Australians. For instance, Indigenous peoples still do not enjoy equitable access to higher education or senior secondary schooling in Australia. Bearing this in mind, group training is doing very well in serving Australia's Indigenous population.

These aggregate trends, however, mask some of the inequities that continue to persist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the general apprenticeship and traineeship system.

For instance, NCVET (2001a) found that Indigenous peoples are under-represented in apprenticeships and traineeships in the skilled trades, and they are considerably over-represented in apprenticeships and traineeships in the labouring occupations, and in the clerical, sales and service occupations when compared with other Australians. As shown in figure 4.6, a similar trend is found within the group training framework. This suggests that although group training is serving the Indigenous community far better than the general apprenticeship and traineeship system, Indigenous peoples still don't have the same opportunities as other Australians to access apprenticeships and traineeships as skilled tradespersons or related occupations under group training.

Figure 4.6: Indigenous and non-Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees by occupation and qualification, June 2000



* Includes those where Aboriginality was not stated
Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

As is the case for all apprenticeships and traineeships, Indigenous apprentices and trainees are more likely than other Australians to be employed with a group training company in managerial and administrative, professional or associate professional occupations (figure 4.6).

Indigenous peoples are not adequately represented in higher qualifications at AQF certificate III and above in general apprenticeships and traineeships, even though the situation has improved significantly since 1995.⁴ The same situation holds for those in group training, as can be seen from figure 4.6. However, by comparison with the situation for all apprentices and trainees, the situation is better for Indigenous peoples undertaking group training. Indigenous peoples are also more likely than other Australians to be undertaking group training programs at AQF certificate I or II. Again, the situation for Indigenous peoples is better under group training than for other apprenticeships and traineeships.

Importance of group training for people reporting a disability

The total number of people in apprenticeships and traineeships or new apprenticeships reporting a disability has increased five-fold over the past five years from only 1000 (or 0.8% of all apprentices and trainees) in 1995 to 5600 (or 2.0%) in 2000. The growth within group training has been even more dramatic, with numbers increasing nine-fold from just over 100

⁴ The nature of Indigenous participation in apprenticeships and traineeships is discussed more fully in Robinson and Hughes (1999, pp.24–29).

(or 0.8% of apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies) in 1995 to almost 1300 (or 3.3%) in 2000 (table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, June 1995–2000

Year	Group training			All apprentices and trainees	
	People reporting a disability			People reporting a disability	
	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>Proportion of group training apprentices and trainees</i>	<i>Share of all apprentices and trainees reporting a disability (%)</i>	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>Proportion of total apprentices and trainees</i>
1995	140	0.8	13.3	1020	0.8
1996	220	1.1	13.4	1640	1.0
1997	380	1.6	16.1	2370	1.4
1998	560	1.9	15.9	3520	1.8
1999	950	2.8	19.0	5020	2.0
2000	1270	3.3	22.4	5640	2.0

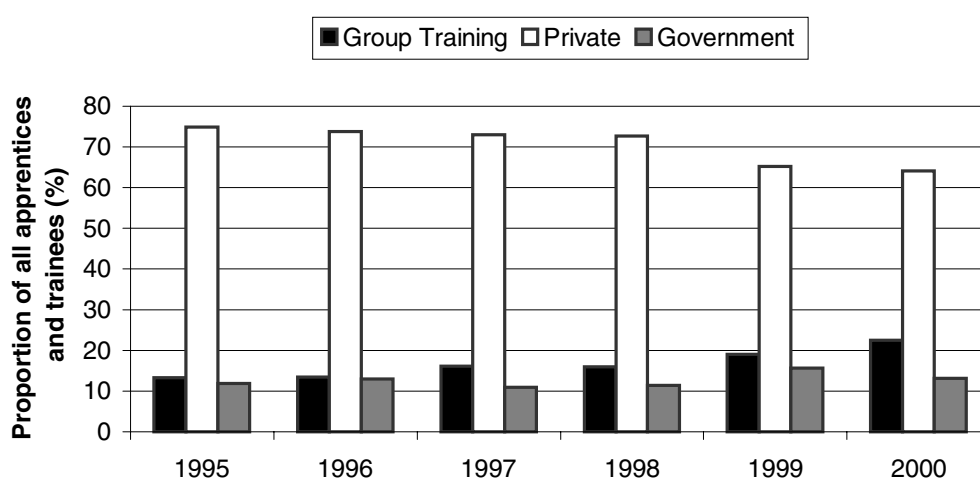
Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

In 1995, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training recommended in their report, *A best kept secret—Report on the role and effectiveness of group training companies* that:

The Department of Human Services and Health, together with Group Training Australia, facilitate the cooperation of Competitive Employment, Training and Placement, and Supported Employment Services and group training companies, to increase the number of people with a disability employed as apprentices and trainees in group training companies.

The strong growth observed since 1995 is evidence that group training has been successful in meeting this objective by significantly improving training opportunities for people with disabilities. In fact, as shown in figure 4.7, of the major employer groups, group training has been the most successful in advancing the cause of apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities for people reporting a disability.

Figure 4.7: Apprentices and trainees reporting a disability by major employer type, June 1995–2000



Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

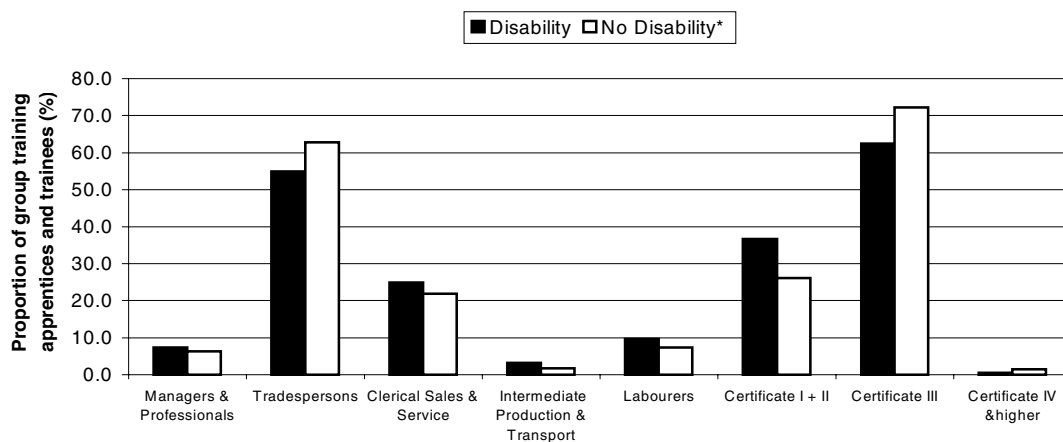
In the Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998 disability survey, some 16.4% of all Australians of working age (that is, 15–64 years of age) reported having a disability of some kind. Some 14.1% reported a disability involving restrictions in core activities such as communication difficulties, mobility difficulties and difficulties requiring self-care and/or restrictions impeding the ability to undertake education and/or employment. Some 2.3% reported no such specific restrictions with their disability or disabilities but reported that they had a disability where they needed assistance with health care, paperwork, transport, housework, property maintenance and/or meal preparation.

Improvements in the access by people with disabilities to group training apprenticeships and traineeships in recent years means that the group training system is performing better than the sector in general in terms of equity in its coverage of the Australian working-age population with a disability but with no specific restrictions. Some 3.3% of all group training apprentices and trainees reported having a disability in 2000 compared with around 2.3% of the Australian working-age population having a disability not involving any specific restrictions. The percentage for all apprentices and trainees is around 2.0%.

However, coverage of people with more-severe disabilities involving restrictions in core activities and/or impediments to undertaking education or employment in the apprenticeship and traineeships system as a whole remains poor.

In relation to those people with disabilities gaining access to group training apprenticeships and traineeships, the profiles of their occupations and qualifications undertaken are somewhat similar to occupations and qualifications of those undertaken by people who have no disability or who have not reported any disability. This is shown in figure 4.8. These profiles are also very similar to those for all apprentices and trainees reporting/not reporting a disability.

Figure 4.8: Group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability and not reporting a disability by occupation and qualification, June 2000



* Includes those with an undisclosed disability
 Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

People of non-English-speaking backgrounds in group training apprenticeships and traineeships

Around 4% of group training apprentices and trainees reported that they were of non-English-speaking background in 2000, with the main language spoken at home not being English. This compares with just over 7% of all apprentices and trainees.

The numbers of apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies of non-English-speaking background have also increased significantly since the mid 1990s, from less than 400 in 1995 to over 1400 in 2000. As a result, the proportion of group training apprentices

and trainees who are of non-English-speaking backgrounds has risen from 2.2% in 1995 to 3.8% in 2000 (table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Growth in the numbers of apprentices and trainees from a non-English-speaking background, June 1995–2000

Year	Group training				All apprentices and trainees			
	Non-English-speaking background		English-speaking background*		Non-English-speaking background		English-speaking background*	
	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number in training</i>	<i>%</i>
1995	390	2.2	17 100	97.8	5 610	4.1	130 310	95.9
1996	600	2.9	20 100	97.1	6 800	4.3	149 720	95.7
1997	790	3.3	22 760	96.7	7 960	4.6	163 920	95.4
1998	900	3.1	27 820	96.9	8 960	4.6	183 970	95.4
1999	1 380	4.0	33 000	96.0	15 910	6.3	236 900	93.7
2000	1 430	3.8	36 390	96.2	20 950	7.5	257 120	92.5

* Includes those who did not state their main language spoken at home

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

While the observed growth is positive, less than 7% of all apprentices and trainees who are of non-English-speaking backgrounds are employed with group training companies. This is the same proportion as in 1995 and represents a decline from 1998 when more than 10% were involved in group training.

Despite the considerable improvements made in overall participation by people of non-English-speaking backgrounds in apprenticeships and traineeships in general, they still face considerable inequality of access to the new apprenticeship system compared with other Australians. In the 1996 census of population and housing, some 13.9% of residents reported they were of non-English-speaking background. This proportion is slightly higher if we consider the working-age population, where some 14.6% of residents in Australia are from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

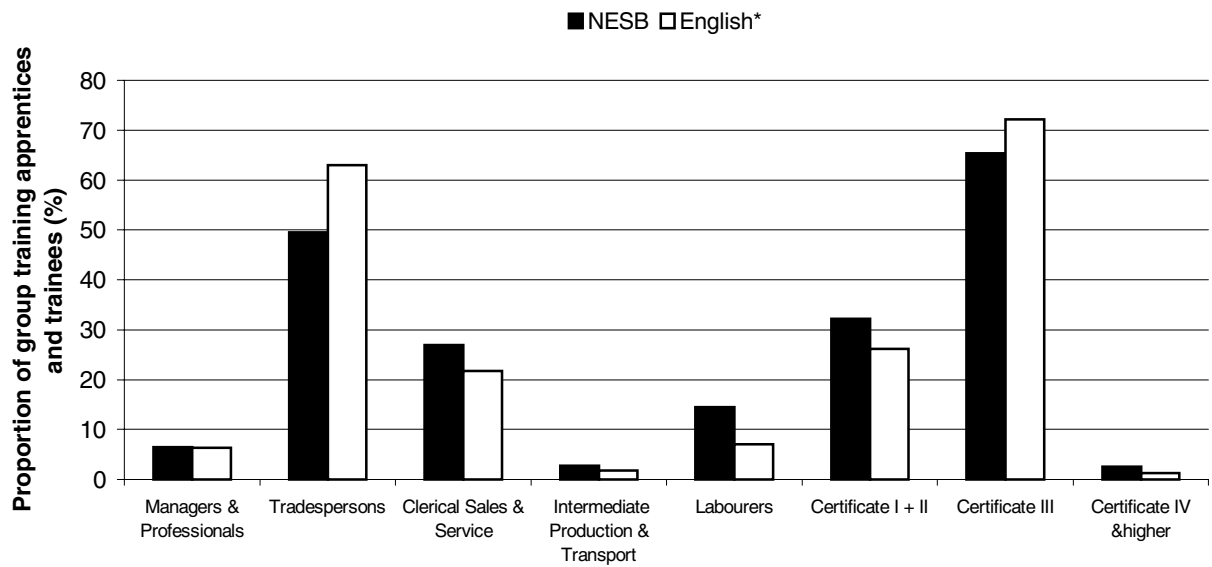
Thus the number of apprentices and trainees of non-English-speaking background, both as a whole and within the group training movement, would need to increase dramatically for equity to be reached with Australians of English-speaking backgrounds. It is important to note, however, that in 2000, some 23 000 or 8% of all apprentices and trainees did not report their language background. Naturally, some of this group may be of non-English-speaking background, so the differences in participation of apprentices and trainees between peoples of non-English-speaking and English-speaking backgrounds may not be as great as the statistics suggest.

In relation to the occupations of group training apprentices and trainees, persons of non-English-speaking backgrounds are under-represented in the skilled trades and over-represented in the clerical, sales, service, and labourer occupations, compared with other Australians (figure 4.9). A similar result is found for all apprentices and trainees in general.

The qualification profiles of group training apprentices and trainees of non-English-speaking backgrounds and all other group training apprentices and trainees differ slightly (figure 4.9). Whereas group training apprentices and trainees of non-English-speaking backgrounds are slightly under-represented at AQF certificate III, they are slightly over-represented at AQF certificate I and II, noting of course there are very few AQF certificate I programs. This profile differs somewhat from the general apprentice and trainee population, suggesting similar representation for apprentices and trainees of non-English-speaking backgrounds and all other apprentices and trainees for various qualifications. This is primarily due to the greater

dominance of trade apprenticeships and traineeships in group training which have a history of low participation by people from non-English-speaking backgrounds.⁵

Figure 4.9: Apprentices and trainees of English and non-English-speaking backgrounds by occupation and qualification, June 2000



* Includes those who did not state their main language spoken at home
 Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

More statistical information about the characteristics of group training apprentices and trainees is given in appendix 2.

⁵ Issues concerning impact of English language difficulties on people undertaking apprenticeships and traineeships is examined further by O'Neill and Gish (2001).

5 Completions and employment outcomes from group training apprenticeships and traineeships

So far, the analysis has focussed on the numbers participating in apprenticeships and traineeships under group training schemes and comparison with the apprentice and trainee population in general. However, the most critical issues are the extent to which apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies are successful in completing their contract of training, and the extent to which such apprentices and trainees gain ongoing employment.

The issue of non-completion and attrition from apprenticeships and traineeships has become one of increasing importance in recent times, with the perception that non-completion and attrition rates are high for apprenticeships and traineeships in general. As shown by NCVER (2001a), the issue is not simple and such perceptions are generally not supported after analysis of national apprentice and trainee data.

To date, there has been very little analysis of completion and rates of attrition for apprenticeships and traineeships within the group training context. Mathers (2000) considered the issue of completion targets for group training companies as part of the recent review of the Group Training Expansion Programme but failed to analyse rates of attrition due to insufficient data.

Before tackling the issue of non-completion and attrition within group training, it is important to understand what an apprenticeship and traineeship completion entails. Completing an apprenticeship or traineeship has a number of dimensions which complicates both the measurement issue and, more importantly, the awarding of qualifications and testaments to apprentices and trainees.

A successful completion requires three different steps to be taken. These steps are:

- ❖ completion of the *formal off-the-job requirements* of the apprenticeship/traineeship (that is, obtaining the qualification of the apprenticeship/traineeship)
- ❖ completion of the *indenture period* of the apprenticeship/traineeship (that is, remaining in the apprenticeship/traineeship for the full indenture period of the contract of training and meeting the on-the-job requirements as endorsed by the employer)
- ❖ once both of these requirements have been met, notification to the *State/Territory training authority* of the successful completion of the contract of training by the apprentice/trainee, together with provision of required evidence of the successful completion of the apprenticeship/traineeship

The administrative requirements are substantial and as a result, some apprentice/trainee indenture periods reach their 'expiry date' without a withdrawal, a cancellation or a completion being reported and recorded.

As a result, the true level of completion is yet to be fully established because of the complexities in reporting described above and concomitant problems in data collection. This is discussed further in NCVER's publication, *Australian apprenticeships: Facts, fiction and futures* (NCVER 2001a). State and Territory training authorities together with NCVER are currently looking at ways to improve the reporting of completions to allow for more accurate measurement. Nevertheless, it is still possible to examine historical and emerging trends in

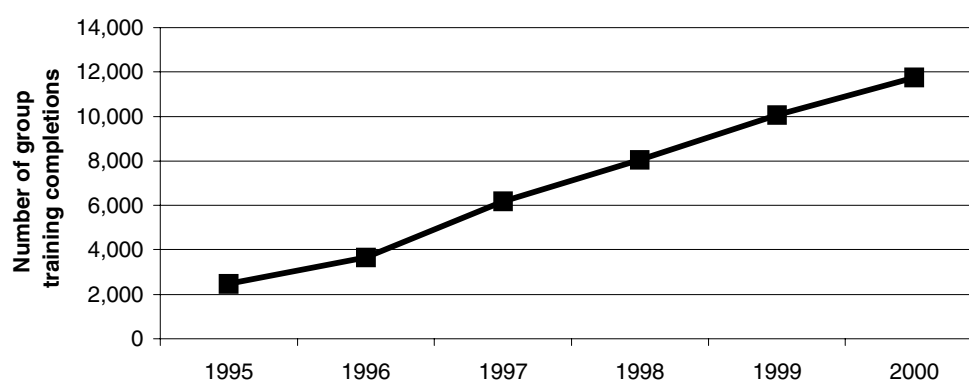
apprentice and trainee completions based on the existing national data as they are sufficiently robust for such purposes.

Growth in group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions

Over the past six years, overall numbers of apprentices and trainees successfully completing a contract of training have grown very significantly, with the number of completions more than doubling since 1995, reaching almost 84 000 by 2000.

As depicted in figure 5.1, the total number of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions since 1995 has also increased markedly, from 2500 in 1995 to 11 800 in 2000 at an annual rate of more than 36%. This compares with an annual rate of growth for all apprentices and trainee completions of just under 21% over the same period. In terms of annual growth rates, apprentice and trainee completions from group training employers are the highest of all major employer types since the mid 1990s.

Figure 5.1: Number of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

This growth is also apparent when one looks at the proportional distribution of total apprentice and trainee completions by type of major employer. As shown in table 5.1, group training's share of apprentice and trainee completions has increased from 7.5% of all completions in 1995 to around 14% by June 2000. On the other hand, the public sector's share has dropped to less than 9% in 2000, while the proportion of completions from private employers also declined slightly. This highlights the growing importance and contribution of group training in enhancing Australia's skilled workforce.

Table 5.1: Distribution of apprenticeship and traineeship completions by major employer types, 1995–2000

Year	Proportion of total apprentice and trainee completions* (%)			
	Group training employers	Private employers	Government-related employers	All employers
1995	7.5	78.3	14.2	100.0
1996	11.6	76.3	12.2	100.0
1997	14.0	76.2	9.6	100.0
1998	14.9	76.2	8.8	100.0
1999	15.9	75.7	8.3	100.0
2000	14.0	77.0	8.7	100.0

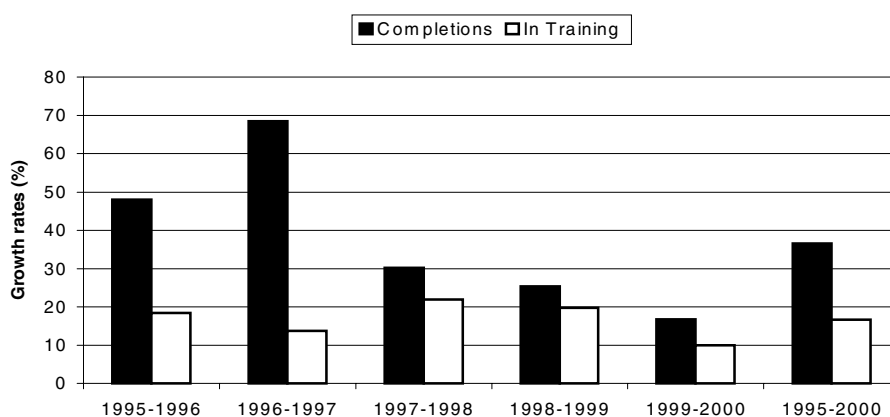
* Based on the number of completions over the 12 months ending 30 June

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The decline in market share for group training during 2000 is worthy of note. It is too early to tell if this is just a one-off aberration or the beginning of a longer term trend, as potential reasons behind the decline are as yet not clear. Perhaps it is simply a result of the general slowdown in the entire apprenticeship and traineeship system in recent times following a period of particularly rapid growth. However, there is concern that changes to Federal Government adjustments to training incentives in the 1996–97 and 1997–98 budgets have resulted in a negative impact on the group training sector. Group Training Australia raised these concerns in their submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education References Committee (GTA 2000). They suggested that the decrease in incentive payments and the withdrawal of a completion payment for not-for-profit companies was having a negative effect on group training companies. Furthermore, they have argued for a reversal of the changes, since competitors now use this against them claiming that employers will not receive the payments. Ongoing analysis over the next few years will be required to ascertain whether these changes have had a negative impact or not.

As already noted, group training completions have grown at an annual rate of 36.5% since 1995. There was, however, considerable variation in the growth of group training completions during the period since 1995, and the decline in growth over the last few years is particularly worthy of note (figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Growth rates for group training apprenticeship and traineeship numbers in training and completions, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The annual growth in the number of group training apprentices and trainees has followed a similar pattern, with levels of growth slowing over recent years (figure 5.2). Again, the question is whether this is a result of the general slowdown in the apprentice and trainee system observed in recent times, or whether it is due to other factors such as those raised by Group Training Australia. This organisation also raised concerns over the new tax system introduced in 2000, arguing that many host employers are only involved in employment-based training because of the service and convenience provided by group training companies. They are concerned that many host employers will ultimately abandon employment-based training rather than suffer the additional costs, notwithstanding the availability of input tax credits (GTA 2000). Again, time will tell whether such concerns are justified.

Despite these issues, what is surprising about these trends is that growth rates for group training completions have always been higher than for group training numbers in training over the period 1995 to 2000. While there has been a perception that completions' growth has not been sufficient to keep pace with the growth in the numbers of apprentices and trainees in the entire system, this is definitely not the case for group training. In aggregate terms, the growth in group training apprentice and trainee numbers that has occurred in recent years has not been accompanied by a decline in group training completions.

A similar trend is found for all apprentices and trainees, with growth rates for total apprentice and trainee completions higher, in general, than the growth rates for overall apprentice and trainee numbers over the period 1995 to 2000 (NCVER 2001a).

It is also important to note that recent NCVER research found evidence that a number of apprentices and trainee completions were not being under-reported, leading to an understatement of the actual number of completions being achieved. However, as the research did not carry out analysis lower for various employer types, it is not known how large this problem is for group training.

However, if under-reporting of completions for group training has been on a similar scale to that for all apprenticeships and traineeships, the number of group training completions may well be underestimated by an amount in the order of 20%. Although this amount will naturally vary across different jurisdictions, it suggests the number of group training completions for the 12 months ending June 2000 may actually be as high as 14 000 instead of the 12 000 actually reported. Ongoing consultation between NCVER and State/Territory training authorities is attempting to establish new procedures that will more accurately measure the true level of completions.

Qualifications attained by completing group training apprentices and trainees

The dominance of AQF certificate III qualifications in apprenticeships and traineeships was noted in the previous chapter. The situation for completions is similar, with almost two-thirds (65.5%) of all completing apprentices and trainees in 2000 gaining a certificate III qualification. AQF certificate III qualifications also dominate apprenticeship and traineeship completions under group training.

The dominance of AQF certificate III is somewhat less for group training completions than for all apprenticeship and traineeship completions. Just over half (52.9%) of those completing a contract of training with a group training company gained a certificate III qualification in 2000 (table 5.2).

Over a quarter of all apprentices and trainees gained a certificate II qualification through the completion of their apprenticeship or traineeship. For group training, however, 44% of apprentices and trainees completing in 2000 gained a certificate II qualification. For both group training and the sector in general, most of the remainder gained a certificate IV, diploma or advanced diploma qualification. AQF certificate I qualifications are insignificant and essentially non-existent (table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Qualifications attained by persons completing apprenticeships and traineeships, June 2000

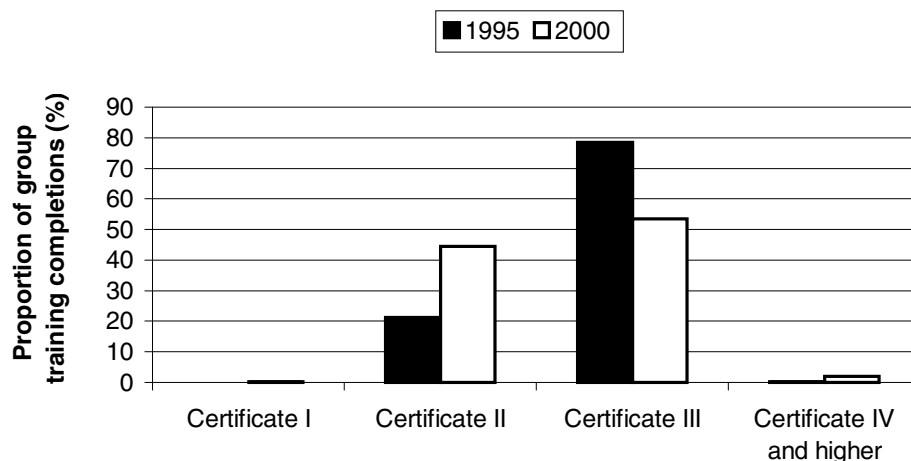
Qualification	Number of group training completions*	Proportion of group training completions (%)	Total number of completions*	Proportion of total completions (%)
Certificate I	20	0.1	150	0.2
Certificate II	5 170	43.9	24 020	28.7
Certificate III	6 220	52.9	54 890	65.5
Certificate IV and higher	240	2.0	3 860	4.6
Not known	120	1.1	830	1.0
Total	11 760	100.0	83 760	100.0

* Completions in the 12 months ending June 2000

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

The change in the relative importance of different qualification levels for group training apprentices and trainees since the mid 1990s is depicted in figure 5.3. While the proportion of certificate III completions has decreased since 1995, the proportion of certificate II completions has increased from just 21% of the known total in 1995 to over 40% in 2000. A similar trend is found for all apprentice and trainee completions.

Figure 5.3: Proportions of group training completions by AQF qualification, 1995 and 2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

It should be noted that the proportion of apprentice and trainee numbers at AQF certificate III has declined markedly in recent years. However, the proportion in group training has not changed to the same degree. As a result, it is expected that the proportion of total completions at AQF certificate III will decrease, while the proportion for group training will not change as much. The reverse is expected for completions at AQF certificate II.

Changes in the occupational mix of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions

For group training, all major occupational groups experienced growth in apprentice and trainee completions over the period 1995 to 2000. A similar result occurred for all apprentices and trainees, except for advanced clerical and service workers occupations, which showed a slight decline (table 5.3).

However, as was the case with overall numbers of apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies, the proportional composition of group training completions by occupation group changed considerably over the last half of the 1990s.

- ❖ Although the number of completions in the tradespersons and related workers occupational category grew from 1840 in 1995 to 4120 in 2000, the proportion of total group training completions in this occupational category declined significantly from 74.3% to 35.0%.
- ❖ The proportion of completions in the clerical, sales and service workers occupational categories increased significantly, from 17.5% to 31.8% in the intermediate clerical, sales and service workers occupational category, and from 4.0% to 9.7% in the elementary clerical, sales and service workers occupational category.
- ❖ The proportion in the labourers and related workers occupational category increased from 2.1% in 1995 to 12.2% in 2000.

Ignoring the advanced clerical and service workers occupational category, which is essentially insignificant in terms of numbers, group training apprentices and trainees in tradespersons

and related areas had the lowest annual growth rate of 17.5% over the period 1995 to 2000. All other major occupational groups experienced annual growth rates of over 50%. This highlights increased completions in non-traditional group training apprenticeships and traineeships, commensurate with the general growth in these occupations.

Table 5.3: Number of group training completions by occupation group, 1995 and 2000

Occupation group	1995		2000		Annual rate of growth 1995 to 2000**	Annual rate of growth for all apprentices and trainees 1995 to 2000**
	Number of completions*	Proportion of total (%)	Number of completions*	Proportion of total (%)		
Managers & administrators	10	0.5	430	3.7	101.3	22.5
Professionals	0	0.0	190	1.6	-	114.1
Associate professionals	30	1.1	430	3.6	72.6	57.6
Tradespersons & related workers	1 840	74.3	4 120	35.0	17.5	2.4
Advanced clerical & service workers	(a)	0.3	(a)	0.1	5.4	-22.9
Intermediate clerical, sales & service workers	430	17.5	3 740	31.8	53.8	37.5
Intermediate production & transport workers	(a)	0.2	270	2.3	122.7	70.6
Elementary clerical, sales & service workers	100	4.0	1 140	9.7	63.1	48.1
Labourers & related workers	50	2.1	1 430	12.2	94.1	54.3
Total completions	2 480	100.0	11 760	100.0	36.5	20.6

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

* Completions in the 12 months ending 30 June

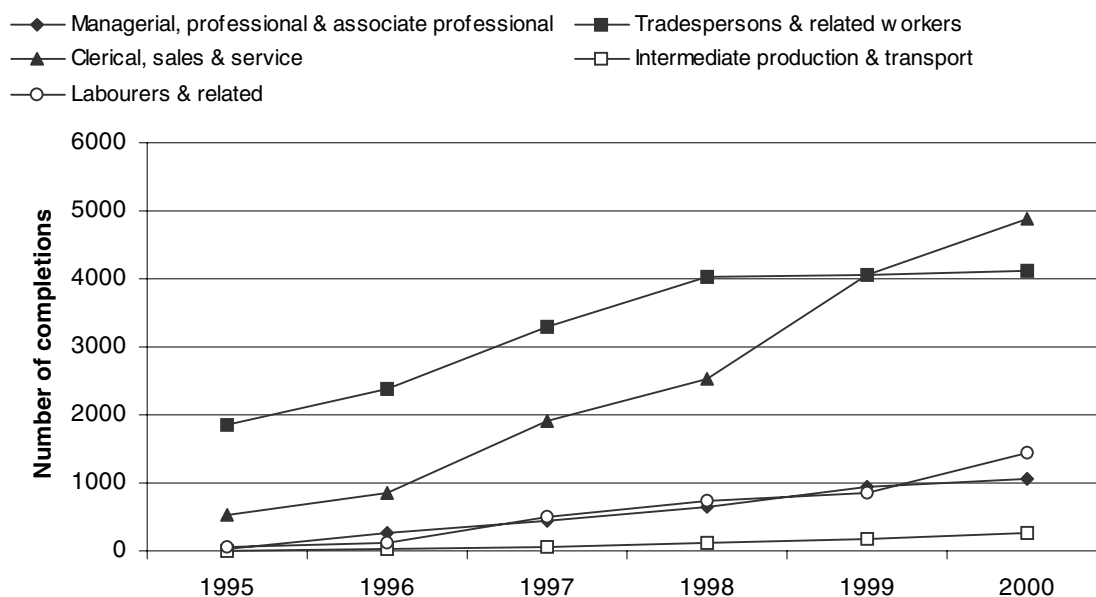
** Annual rates of growth for the period 1995 to 2000 are compound growth rates

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The growth in the actual numbers of group training completions in each major occupational group since 1995 is illustrated in figure 5.4. As mentioned above, the proportion of group training completions from trade apprenticeships and traineeships declined significantly from 1995. However, with 4100 completions in 2000, completions in the skilled trades remain higher than for any other occupational group of group training completions. Next are the intermediate clerical, sales and service occupations with 3700 completions in 2000, having grown the most in terms of actual numbers from only 400 completions in 1995.

Completions in the skilled trades for group training are shown in more detail in table 5.4. All trade occupational groups showed growth in group training completions over the period 1995 to 2000. Apprentice and trainee completions in the construction trades are the largest group, with almost 1100 completions in 2000. Completions from the mechanical and fabrication engineering, electrical and electronics, and food occupations were next with just over 700 completions each. Completions in the automotive trades (600) were also substantial. In all cases, the annual rate of growth for group training completions was significantly higher than that for all apprentice and trainee completions.

Figure 5.4: Growth of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by major occupational group, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table 5.4: Group training completions in the skilled trades and related occupations, 1995–2000

Trade occupations	Number of group training completions*						Annual rate of growth 1995 to 2000**	Annual rate of growth for all apprentices and trainees 1995 to 2000**
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000		
Mechanical & fabrication engineering tradespersons	290	320	390	590	640	710	19.7	1.6
Automotive tradespersons	210	330	430	590	580	610	23.7	4.0
Electrical & electronics tradespersons	290	320	400	620	640	710	19.5	-0.9
Construction tradespersons	540	810	1320	1420	1370	1070	14.4	-0.2
Food tradespersons	360	430	500	500	530	710	14.8	11.8
Skilled agricultural & horticultural workers	80	90	100	100	110	120	8.9	2.1
Other tradespersons & related workers	70	90	160	210	190	190	22.2	0.5
Total tradespersons & related workers	1840	2400	3290	4030	4060	4120	17.5	2.4

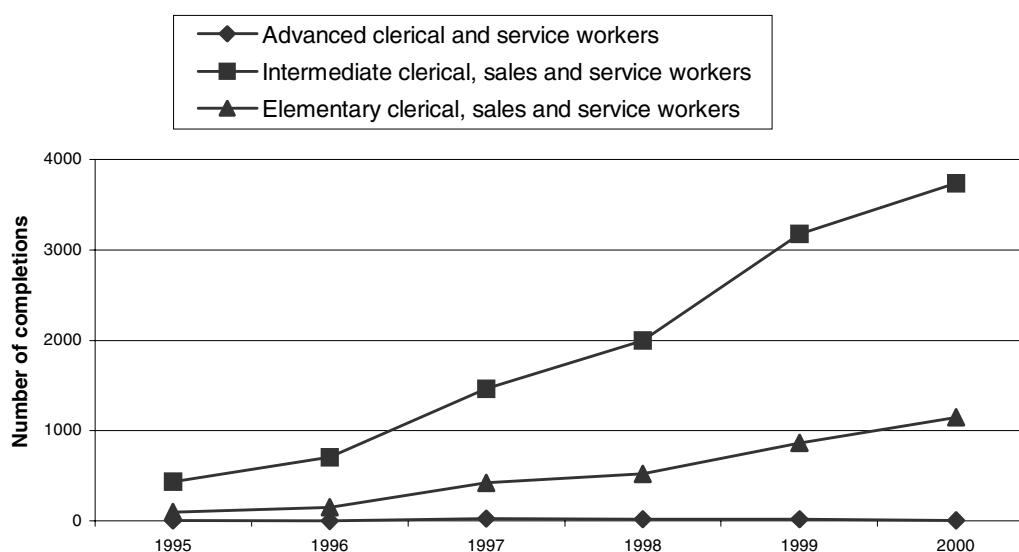
* Completions over the 12 months ending 30 June

** Annual rates of growth for the period 1995 to 2000 are compound growth rates

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Growth in the numbers of group training apprentice and trainee completions in the intermediate clerical, sales and service category has been particularly rapid since 1995, while growth in elementary clerical, sales and service completions has also been high but from a smaller base (figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5: Growth in group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions in the clerical, sales and service occupations



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Characteristics of people completing group training apprenticeships and traineeships

As the characteristics of those participating in group training apprenticeships and traineeships have changed, so too have the characteristics of those completing.

The gender and age of completing apprentices and trainees

For apprentices and trainees undertaking training through group training companies, males account for almost 63% of completions compared with 57% for all apprenticeships and traineeships (table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by gender, 1995–2000

Year	Group training				All apprentices and trainees			
	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	Number of completions ('000)*	%	Number of completions ('000)*	%	Number of completions ('000)*	%	Number of completions ('000)*	%
1995	1.9	74.9	0.6	25.1	23.8	72.5	9.0	27.5
1996	2.7	72.9	1.0	27.1	23.2	73.2	8.5	26.8
1997	4.5	73.3	1.6	26.7	31.2	70.6	13.0	29.4
1998	5.7	71.1	2.3	28.9	36.9	68.3	17.1	31.7
1999	6.6	65.7	3.5	34.3	40.0	63.0	23.5	37.0
2000	7.4	62.6	4.4	37.4	47.7	57.0	36.1	43.0

* Completions over the 12 months ending 30 June

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

As is the case for all apprentices and trainees, the gap between males and females in terms of apprentice and trainee completions within group training has narrowed since the mid 1990s.

Female group training completions have grown from 600 in 1995 to over 4000 in 2000. The number of males completing apprenticeships and traineeships with group training employers has also grown over the period 1995 to 2000, from 1900 in 1995 to 7400 in 2000.

It is, however, interesting to note that the gap between male and female completions for group training is somewhat wider than for all apprentices and trainees in general. This is due to the greater dominance of apprenticeships and traineeships in the skilled trades and related areas within group training, occupations traditionally dominated by males.

The age profile of completing apprentices and trainees employed under a group training scheme is also slightly different from that for all apprentices and trainees. From table 5.6, it can be seen that the age profile for completing group training apprentices and trainees is younger than that for completing apprentices and trainees.

More than 80% of all group training apprentices and trainees are aged 24 years or less when they complete their contract of training. This compares with less than 60% of all apprentices and trainees being aged 24 years or less when they complete their contract of training (table 5.6). This is again consistent with the greater dominance of skilled trades and related occupations within group training. Such occupations have a history of attracting a younger constituency.

Table 5.6: Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by age, 2000

Age group	Number of group training completions* ('000)	Proportion of group training completions (%)	Total no. of completions* ('000)	Proportion of total completions (%)
15–19 years**	3.4	28.8	12.5	15.0
20–24 years	6.2	52.9	36.1	43.1
25–39 years	1.6	14.0	20.7	24.8
40–64 years	0.5	4.3	14.4	17.1
All ages	11.8	100.0	83.8	100.0

* Completions over the 12 months ending 30 June

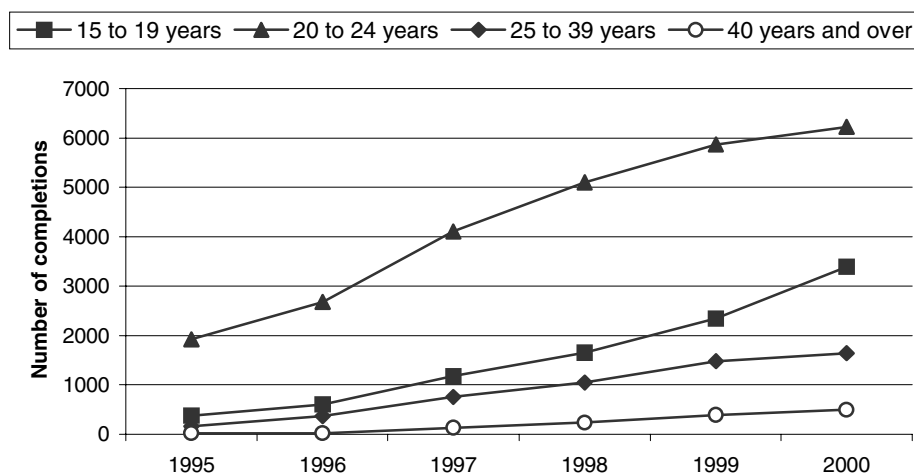
** Includes a small number aged less than 15 years

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

While all age groups have experienced strong growth in numbers of group training completions (figure 5.6), the largest growth since 1995 has been amongst those aged 24 years or less when completing. This result is markedly different from that observed for apprentice and trainee completions, where the greatest growth occurred for older persons aged 40 years or more. This is again due to the greater dominance of the trades within group training, whereby many young people begin their indenture during or soon after completing school and usually complete it three to four years later.

While there has been growth in group training completions by persons aged 25 years or more since 1995, the growth has not been as significant as that for younger people (figure 5.6). This suggests that group training provides a valuable mechanism for entry-level training for young people. However, it has been much slower to expand into older age groups than into the sector in general.

Figure 5.6: Growth in the number of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by age, 1995–2000

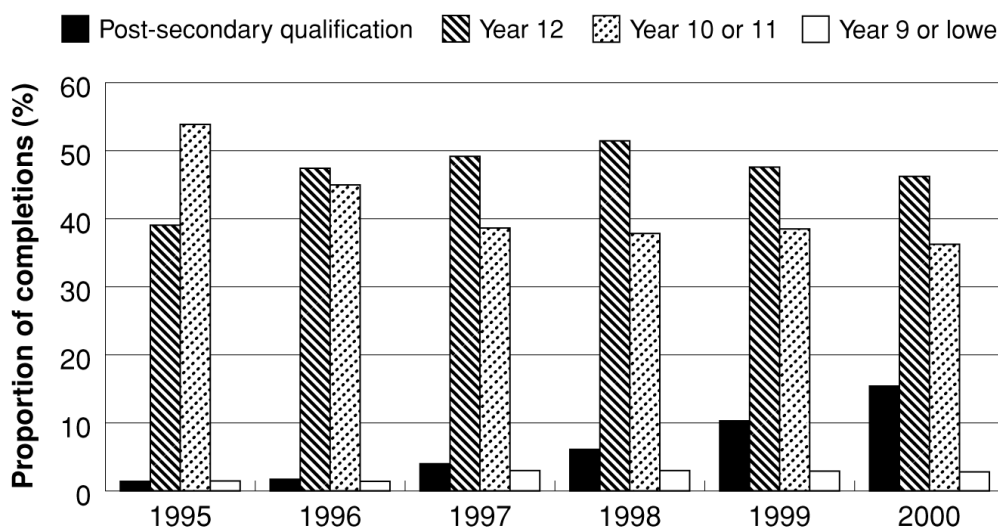


Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Highest level of educational attainment

The highest previous educational attainment of completing apprentices and trainees from group training is presented in figure 5.7. Similar profiles between group training and all apprentices and trainees existed in 1995; however, there are some notable differences in the profiles in 2000. In particular, similar proportions of completers (around 40%) had either completed Year 12 or Years 10 or 11 prior to commencing their apprenticeship or traineeship for the population in general. For group training, however, the proportion of completers completing Year 12 prior to commencement of their training is higher (46%), while those who had completed Years 10 or 11 was lower (36%). Also, there has been a notable increase in the proportion of group training completers who had finished Year 12 prior to commencing their training since 1995, while the proportion for all apprentices and trainees has remained the same.

Figure 5.7: Group training completions by highest previous educational attainment, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The proportion of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completors who had previously obtained another tertiary qualification has risen from just over 1% in 1995 to over 15% in 2000 (figure 5.7). While there has also been an increase in the number of group training completors who had achieved a schooling level of Year 9 or lower as their highest level of educational attainment, from 1.5% in 1995 to 2.8% in 2000, the increase is not as marked as that occurring for the entire apprentice and trainee population.

In simple terms, it appears the highest previous educational attainment of group training completors has remained much the same except that there has been a shift from Years 10 or 11 as the highest level to Year 12. In other words, while group training has continued to attract people directly from secondary schooling—they now tend to complete Year 12 rather than leaving school at Years 10 or 11.

Geographic region

Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions in 2000 for each jurisdiction are shown in table 5.7. Western Australia, with 12.1% of all group training completions, enjoys a much higher share than it does of general apprentice and trainee completions (8.0%). On the other hand, South Australia's share of group training completions (6.7%) is significantly lower than their share of total apprentice and trainee completions (10.6%). The share of group training completions for other jurisdictions is commensurate to that of their share of total completions (table 5.7).

Table 5.7: Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by State and Territory, 2000

State/Territory	Group training		All apprentices and trainees		
	Number of completions*	Proportion of total (%)	Number of completions*	Proportion of total (%)	Share of 15–64-year-old population (%)
New South Wales	2 860	24.3	18 900	22.6	33.5
Victoria	2 790	23.7	19 830	23.7	24.9
Queensland	2 880	24.5	20 600	24.6	18.7
Western Australia	1 430	12.1	6 660	8.0	10.0
South Australia	790	6.7	8 860	10.6	7.7
Tasmania	690	5.9	6 020	7.2	2.4
Australian Capital Territory	210	1.8	2 090	2.5	1.7
Northern Territory	110	1.0	810	1.0	1.1
Australia	11 760	100.0	83 760	100.0	100.0

* Completions in the 12 months ending 30 June 2000

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection, ABS 2000a

Turning to completions in rural and urban areas of Australia, just under 57% of group training completions are by apprentices and trainees in urban areas, most of which are in capital cities. Most of the remainder live in rural and remote locations. The profile for group training completors is somewhat different from that for all apprentice and trainee completors where a higher proportion (63%) live in urban areas and a lower proportion (36%) live in rural or remote areas (table 5.8).

In terms of proportional shares of completions within the group training sector compared with regional shares of total apprentice and trainee completions, rural and remote areas are well represented. On the other hand, capital cities and other metropolitan areas are under-represented in their share of apprentice and trainee completions. In fact, more than a quarter

of all completions in remote areas are from group training. This compares with less than 13% of all completions in capital cities being from group training.

Table 5.8: Apprenticeship and traineeship completions by geographic region, 2000

Geographic region*	Group training		All apprentices and trainees		
	Number of completions**	Proportion of total (%)	Number of completions**	Proportion of total (%)	Proportion of working-age population*** (%)
Capital city	5 860	49.8	46 110	55.1	65.5
Other metropolitan	820	6.9	6 260	7.5	7.5
Rural	4 270	36.3	27 650	33.0	24.2
Remote	670	5.7	2 610	3.1	2.8
Total****	11 760	100.0	83 760	100.0	100.0

* 'Capital city' consists of ABS State/Territory capital city statistical divisions; 'other metropolitan' consists of urban centres with a population greater than 100 000; 'rural' consists of urban centres with a population of 5000 or more, and 'remote' consists of those areas with a population less than 5000

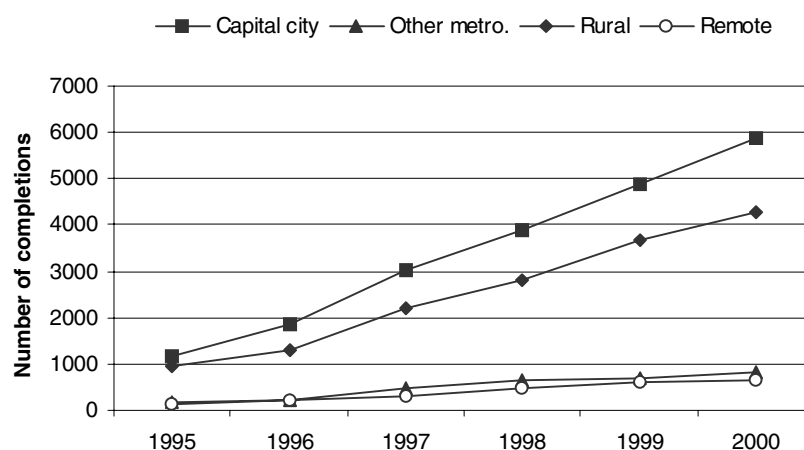
** Completions over the 12 months ending 30 June 2000, *** Population aged 15–64 years

**** Includes outside Australia and unknown location

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection, ABS 2000a

In terms of growth rates, the growth of group training completions has been similar across all regional areas. Of particular note is the strong growth in group training completions from those apprentices and trainees residing in capital cities and rural areas. As shown in figure 5.8, apprentice and trainee completions in these areas have grown from 1200 in 1995 to 5900 in 2000 for capital cities, and from around 900 in 1995 to 4300 in 2000 for rural areas.

Figure 5.8: Growth in the number of group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by geographic region, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Completions by Indigenous apprentices and trainees

The total number of completions by Indigenous apprentices and trainees has grown strongly since 1995, as shown in table 5.9. The Indigenous share of total completions reached a peak of 2.7% in 1999, well ahead of the Indigenous share of 1.9% of the working-age population.

During 2000, however, total Indigenous completion numbers declined quite sharply to only 1.6% of all apprentice and trainee completions.

For group training a similar trend of strong growth in Indigenous completions has occurred over the last half of the 1990s. The share of group training completions by Indigenous peoples increased from almost nothing (0.4%) to 5% in 1999, significantly higher than for all apprentice and trainee completions. As for completions in general, the share of group training completions by Indigenous peoples declined sharply during 2000, to 3.1%.

This decline will need to be kept under review over the next year or two to determine whether it is the beginning of a longer term adverse trend. If found to be so, policies aimed at increased overall Indigenous completions may be required to ensure that proportions recover to acceptable levels.

Table 5.9: Completions by Indigenous apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

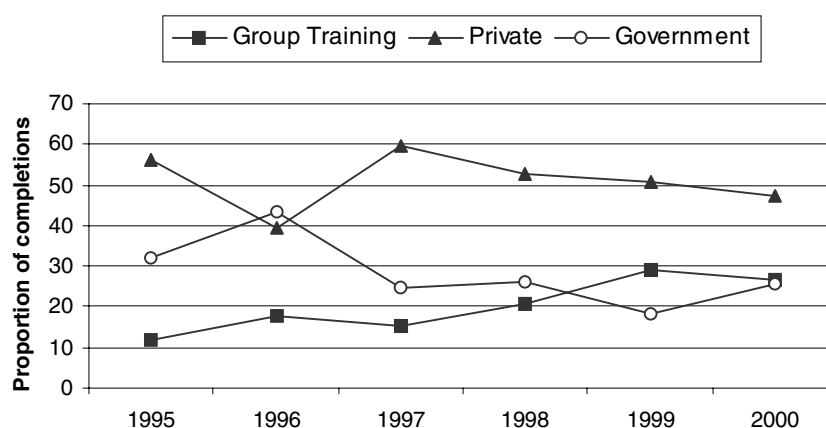
Year	Group training		All apprentices and trainees	
	Indigenous peoples		Indigenous peoples	
	<i>Number of completions*</i>	%	<i>Number of completions*</i>	%
1995	10	0.4	80	0.3
1996	40	1.1	230	0.7
1997	140	2.3	900	2.0
1998	260	3.3	1270	2.3
1999	500	5.0	1710	2.7
2000	360	3.1	1350	1.6

* Completions in the 12 months ending 30 June

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

In terms of overall Indigenous completions, it is worth noting that group training has increased its share from 12% in 1995 to almost 27% in 2000 (figure 5.9). This again highlights the growing importance of group training in providing training opportunities for Australian Indigenous peoples.

Figure 5.9: Growth in the number of Indigenous apprenticeship and traineeship completions by major employer type, 1995–2000



Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Completions by apprentices and trainees reporting a disability

The proportion of total completions by all group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability has improved significantly since 1995. As shown in table 5.10, only 0.3% of total

apprentice and trainee completions were by people reporting a disability, whereas this level reached 1.8% by 2000. It did fall slightly, however, from a peak of 1.9% in 1999.

For group training also, strong growth in completions by people reporting a disability has been experienced since 1995. The share of group training completions by people reporting a disability increased from 0.3% in 1995 to 2.2% in 2000, a proportion higher than for all apprentice and trainee completions. Particularly strong growth has been evidenced since the introduction of new apprenticeships in 1998.

Table 5.10: Completions by apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, 1995–2000

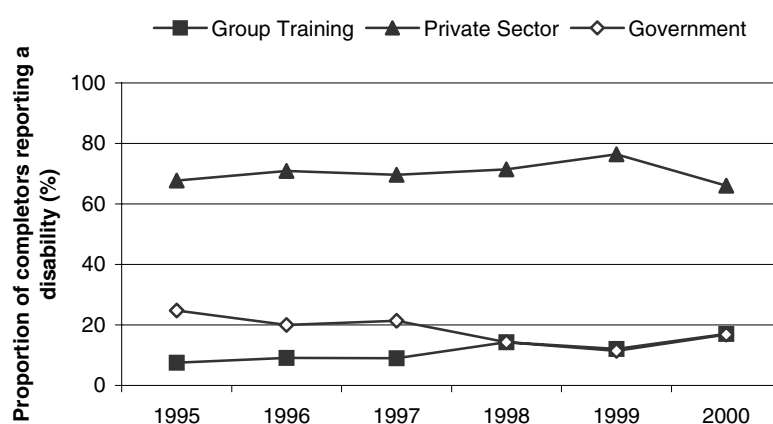
Year	Group training apprentices and trainees		All apprentices and trainees	
	Reporting a disability		Reporting a disability	
	<i>Number of completions*</i>	%	<i>Number of completions*</i>	%
1995	(a)	0.3	90	0.3
1996	20	0.4	180	0.6
1997	30	0.5	320	0.7
1998	90	1.1	640	1.2
1999	150	1.5	1220	1.9
2000	260	2.2	1520	1.8

* Completions over the 12 months ending 30 June
 (a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive
 Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

The share of total completions by group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability is less than the 3.3% share of all group training apprenticeships and traineeships undertaken by people reporting a disability. This suggests people reporting a disability are succeeding in the system at a slightly lower rate compared with their representation in group training.

In terms of overall completions by apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, it is worth noting that group training has increased its share from less than 8% in 1995 to just over 17% in 2000 (figure 5.10). This is primarily a result of a notable decline in the private sector's share of completions for people reporting a disability.

Figure 5.10: Growth in the number of completions of apprentices and trainees reporting a disability by major employer type, 1995–2000



Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Completions by apprentices and trainees of non-English-speaking backgrounds

People of non-English-speaking background made up only 5.6% of total apprentice and trainee completions in 2000. As shown in table 5.11, this proportion has risen from 3.3% in 1995. Within group training, people of non-English-speaking background made up 4.9% of apprentice and trainee completions in 2000, having risen from only 1.4% in 1995.

Table 5.11: Completions by apprentices and trainees with a non-English-speaking background, 1995–2000

Year	Group training		All apprentices and trainees	
	Non-English-speaking background		Non-English-speaking background	
	<i>Number of completions*</i>	%	<i>Number of completions*</i>	%
1995	40	1.4	1080	3.3
1996	50	1.4	1180	3.7
1997	190	3.1	1770	4.0
1998	270	3.3	2330	4.3
1999	350	3.5	2930	4.6
2000	570	4.9	4710	5.6

* Completions over the 12 months ending 30 June

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

As noted previously, around 14% of the Australian working-age population come from a non-English-speaking background, yet only 7% of all apprentices and trainees, and less than 4% of those employed with a group training company are of non-English-speaking background. With only 5.6% of total apprentice and trainee completions in 2000 and only 4.9% for those in group training, people of non-English-speaking backgrounds fall well behind their pro-rata share of successful outcomes in Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system. This is despite the narrowing of the gap between apprentices and trainees from non-English-speaking backgrounds and other apprentices and trainees over recent times.

Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completion rates and attrition

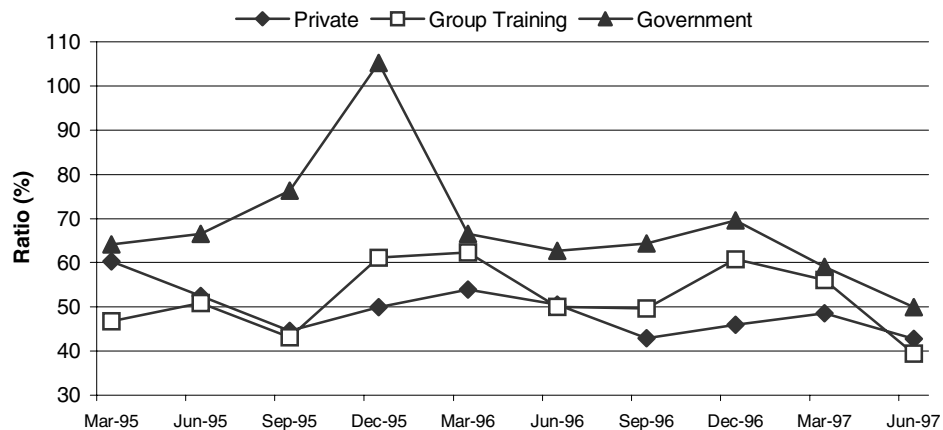
Interest in Australia in the levels and rates of successful completion amongst apprenticeships and traineeships has been rising in recent years. There appears to be a number of reasons for this. Clearly the reform of Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system of the past decade has heightened concern over whether this change is producing better outcomes for apprentices and trainees. In particular, the rapid expansion of the shorter traineeships, which have traditionally experienced higher rates of attrition and lower rates of completion than apprenticeships, has created even more concern about falling rates of success from the system.

This concern has been highlighted in a number of State-level reviews of the apprentice and trainee systems in recent years which have illustrated different rates of completion across Australia. In almost all cases, the reviews have concluded that the rates are unacceptably low.

Traditionally, aggregate level administrative data has been used to determine proxy completions and attrition rates using the ratio of completions to commencements. Such studies generally used the ratio of completions to commencements four years earlier as a proxy for apprenticeship completion rates and the ratio of completions to commencements in the previous year as a proxy for apprenticeship and traineeship completion rates.

Such methods were applied in ANTA (1997b), resulting in conclusions that apprentice and trainee completion rates for group training were lower than those for government and private sectors. The ratios of traineeship completions to commencements one year earlier for major employer types is shown in figure 5.11. It is not surprising that such conclusions were drawn for trainees based on the ratios for March 1995.

Figure 5.11: Ratios of trainee completions to commencements one year earlier by major employer type, March 1995 to June 1997



Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

However, as discussed in NCVER (2001a), such crude proxies of completion rates are misleading for a number of reasons. Recent research by NCVER also found the official statistics do not record all completions which actually occur because of the complexity of the process. The research discovered that completion estimates may be under-estimated by as much as 20% at the national level, while varying considerably across different jurisdictions. Such crude methods also fail to take into account the increased flexibility of contract duration, part-time arrangements, and recommencements.

These factors have a considerable bearing on determining the true rates of completion and attrition. Methodologies to determine accurate measurements of completions must therefore involve tracking individual apprentices and trainees through the system to determine the outcomes they eventually attain.

To gain a better insight into the rate of attrition for group training apprentices and trainees, a cohort of apprentices and trainees tracked from their commencement through to known final status was analysed.

Complete analysis of this cohort is as yet not complete. Preliminary results obtained to date suggest there is little difference in attrition for apprentices and trainees employed by group training companies and those employed with private employers. There does, however, appear to be a marked difference for those employed within the government sector, where attrition was found to be much lower.

Overall, attrition within group training was found to be of a level similar to that for all apprentices and trainees, a result which differs to that found by Ray et al. (2000). Their analysis of apprenticeship attrition in the first year found group training to have a higher level of attrition than non-group training. However, the analysis of Ray et al. was for apprentices only and based on data available for an 18-month period.

In addition to deriving appropriate rates of attrition, there is increasing interest in the reasons behind apprentice and trainee non-completion.

Recent research undertaken by the National Institute of Labour Studies (Cully & Curtin, forthcoming) found a number of factors that affects rates of completion, including age and whether the apprentice/trainee was an existing worker. They also determined the main reasons for non-completion in order of ranking were:

- ❖ dissatisfaction with the job or employer (53%)
- ❖ employer-initiated reasons (19%)
- ❖ dissatisfaction with the training component of the job (19%)
- ❖ personal reasons (11%)

The findings of the work by Cully and Curtin (forthcoming) tend to confirm outcomes from the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) (Grey, Beswick & O'Brien 1999)—that it is aspects of the employment relationship rather than the training relationship which impact on non-completion. However, this research differs from the earlier DETYA work which concluded that non-completion appears to be self-initiated and does not necessarily affect subsequent 'employability'.

Notwithstanding this, another important initial finding from Cully and Curtin (forthcoming) is that some 19% of apprenticeship and traineeship non-completers said they did not receive any training in their contract of training. On the face of it this is a very disturbing finding. Of the 23% to 30% of apprentices who do not complete their apprenticeship, and of the 45% or so of trainees who do not complete their traineeship, almost one in five said they did not receive any training. In some cases they may have been involved in fully on-the-job training indistinguishable to them from normal everyday work. However, noting that the highest rates of attrition occur within the initial period of an apprenticeship or traineeship, it is likely that many of these non-completers left their apprenticeship or traineeship before the formal off-the-job training components had begun. Poor-quality training is clearly a factor in non-completion in a small proportion of cases.

Clearly attrition and non-completion are complex and multi-dimensional phenomena, whatever the rate or level at any particular point in time. Given the complexity of the relationships between employer, trainee and trainer or provider, current rates of completion would seem to be relatively normal, rather than a cause for alarm. This is particularly so when viewed in relation to the job mobility that occurs naturally in the labour market amongst job holders in their first year in a job.

Ray et al. (2000) reported that the highest rate of attrition occurs in the first three to six months, after which the rate of attrition slows considerably. This is an important issue to consider with the focus on training outcomes now extended to completion rates.

Perhaps the best indication of the relative success or otherwise of overall apprenticeship and traineeship completion is a comparison with completion rates attained by people from other forms of education and training. Indicators of completion rates from various types of training are provided in table 5.13 and show that apprenticeship completion rates are high relative to other forms of education and training. While traineeship attrition rates have improved in recent years, their rate of attrition remains low. However, available evidence suggests that traineeship attrition rates are similar to general employment attrition.

However, these results need to be treated with care and should not be generalised for a specific sub-group of the apprentice and trainee population such as group training. Clearly training duration and level have been factors affecting attrition in the past. As group training provides employment-based training in a unique way, there may well be completely different factors that affect attrition among its apprentices and trainees. It has already been seen that the profile of group training apprentices and trainees differs, in some cases substantially, from that of the general apprentice and trainee population.

Table 5.12: Estimates of completion and attrition rates

Type of education and training	Rate of completion (%)	Rate of attrition (%)
Traineeships (1997)	55	45
Apprenticeships (1995–96)	70–74	26–30
TAFE modules (1997)	83	17
University undergraduate degrees (1997)	66	34

Source: NCVET 2001a

One thing that is clear, however, is the lack of research into completion rates and reasons for non-completion for sub-groups of the apprentice and trainee population. This includes areas such as specific geographic regions, employer types (including group training), and industry groups. Such research is particularly recommended in the group training context in light of its uniqueness and increasing prominence in Australia's apprenticeship and traineeship system. A similar recommendation was made in the review by Mathers (2000).

Employment outcomes for group training apprentices and trainees

Employment outcomes from apprenticeships and traineeships are in general very good. Over 90% of all apprentices and trainees who successfully completed their apprenticeship or traineeship in the 12 months ending March 2000 were retained by their employer, or had found employment with a new employer in an unsubsidised job three months after completing their apprenticeship or traineeship. Although lower, the employment outcomes of people who do not finish their apprenticeship or traineeship are also reasonably good. Some 70% of all apprentices and trainees who left their apprenticeship or traineeship without successfully completing it in the 12 months ending March 2000 were employed in an unsubsidised job three months after cessation. It is worth noting that the employment rate of apprentices and trainees improved markedly between 1998 and 1999 regardless of whether they completed their apprenticeship or traineeship or not (table 5.13).

Although based on relatively small numbers, employment outcomes for group training apprentices and trainees appear to be comparable with apprentices and trainees in general. Of those group training apprentices and trainees captured in the post-program monitoring system, 90% of those who had successfully completed their apprenticeship or traineeship in the 12 months ending March 1999 were retained by their employer, or had found employment with a new employer in an unsubsidised job three months after completing their apprenticeship or traineeship. Similarly, the employment outcomes of group training apprentices and trainees who had not finished their apprenticeship or traineeship also appear comparable with those for all apprentices and trainees. As for all apprentices and trainees, these rates increased between 1998 and 1999 (table 5.13).

Table 5.13: Employment outcomes from apprenticeships and traineeships, 1998–2000

Year	Proportion employed in unsubsidised employment three months after cessation (%)			
	Completers		Non-completers	
	<i>Group training apprenticeships and traineeships*</i>	<i>Total apprenticeships and traineeships</i>	<i>Group training apprenticeships and traineeships*</i>	<i>Total apprenticeships and traineeships</i>
1998	83	85	53	50
1999	89	91	72	69
2000	-	93	-	70

* 1998 and 1999 information for group training has been derived from very small numbers and may not be representative of all group training. Extreme caution is recommended when using these figures. Data for 2000 are considered too unreliable and are not shown.

Source: Data supplied from the post-program monitoring system supplied by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs and the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business

While there are benefits to be gained from partial completion, the benefits are clearly higher if the apprentice or trainee successfully completes their apprenticeship or traineeship.

Further information relating to the employment outcomes and career prospects for apprentices and trainees in general is provided in NCVER (2001a).

6 Off-the-job training undertaken by group training apprentices and trainees

Background

The major part of an apprentice's or trainee's training takes place in the environment of their workplace where they are encouraged to learn and train in the competencies essential for their occupational performance. However, apprentices and trainees also undertake vocational education and training (VET) away from the workplace. In this provider-based training, the focus of an apprentice or trainee's learning is broader and, by and large, theory-based.

Provider-based training plays a significant role at various stages of an apprenticeship or traineeship. Most of the activity is off-the-job training delivered at technical and further education (TAFE) institutes or other registered training organisations. There, apprentices and trainees can:

- ❖ broaden their competency base and practise their skills in a context different from the work environment of one particular employer
- ❖ gain non-industry-specific competencies such as computing or basic accounting skills
- ❖ train on machinery and equipment not available in some workplaces but relevant to their occupation

However, apprentices and trainees undertake some of their provider-based training prior to starting their contract of training. Very often the reason for this is to acquire or upgrade skills that are necessary prerequisites for commencing the apprenticeship or traineeship. In this way, individuals increase their chances of finding an employer willing to offer a training contract. Over 5% of the 1999 apprentices and trainees have enrolled in some form of pre-employment, pre-trade or pre-apprenticeship programs.

Some apprentices and trainees even enrol with training providers after completing their apprenticeship or traineeship. Albeit a small proportion of the total (around 2–3%), post-trade up-skilling or other up-skilling programs are an important feature of provider-based training undertaken by apprentices and trainees.

In 1999, about 7% of apprentices and trainees were enrolled in informal provider-based subject only or non-award courses. This indicates that some provider-based activity is not related, or only loosely related, to the training program outlined in the training contract.

Scope

In this chapter we present information on individuals who, in 1999, were enrolled with providers of VET as well as under apprenticeship or traineeship contracts with group training companies or other employers for some time period throughout 1999.

Access to this kind of information requires the application of a methodology that helps to identify individuals in two different national data collections: the Australian VET provider collection and the national apprenticeship and traineeship data collection. This means that for each individual VET student in the provider collection, a set of unique personal

characteristics, such as the date of birth, residential postcode and the like, is used to find the corresponding match in the database for apprentices and trainees.

With this methodology the provider-based training activity of about two-thirds of those persons who were under an apprenticeship or traineeship contract sometime during 1999 could be identified. This implies that the information provided in this chapter is somewhat limited when determining absolute training measures such as the total number of off-the-job training hours undertaken by group training apprentices and trainees.

However, in this chapter we look at characteristics of provider-based activity derived from averaging across large numbers of apprentices and trainees. The information presented here therefore provides a strong indication of the kinds of training apprentices and trainees undertake with registered training organisations (RTOs).

Key findings

Provider-based training broadens the skill base of apprentices and trainees, and adds industry-relevant competencies to those acquired in the workplace environment. Provider-based training undertaken by group training apprentices and trainees is very similar in its basic characteristics to that undertaken by apprentices and trainees under contract with traditional employers. This indicates that group training apprentices and trainees have the same off-the-job training opportunities as apprentices and trainees outside the group training scheme.

With the introduction of the new apprenticeships system in 1998, the uptake of apprenticeships in non-trade occupations has accelerated. However, the trades sector is still taking, under contract, the majority of Australia's apprentices and trainees. As a result, the statistics for off-the-job training undertaken by apprentices and trainees employed with group training companies show a majority of enrolments in the *engineering and surveying* and *architecture and building* fields of study with numbers increasing in the *business, administration and economics* field of study.

Field of study and area of learning

As seen in chapter 3, apprentices and trainees employed under a group training scheme are employed in a wide range of occupations. Despite the fact that group training companies target the training market in most occupations, they are more likely to provide training in the trades sector.

This trend is also apparent in the fields of study of provider-based training in which group training apprentices and trainees enrol. Table 6.1 illustrates that, as would be expected, the qualifications profile of group training apprentices undertaking training in the *engineering and surveying* and *architecture and building* fields of study is broadly similar to apprentices and trainees in trades occupation.

Table 6.1: 1999 group training apprentice and trainee course and qualification enrolments by field of study and qualification of training contract

Course and qualification enrolments	Proportion (%)				
	AQF I and II	AQF III	AQF IV and above	Total ^(a)	Total ^(a) ('000)
Fields of study with high concentration of trades					
Engineering, surveying	16.6	80.2	1.0	100.0	15.2
Architecture, building	8.0	90.2	0.1	100.0	8.1
Other fields of study					
Services, hospitality, transportation	40.6	56.9	0.5	100.0	8.4
Business, administration, economics	39.6	56.0	2.4	100.0	8.3
VET multi-field education	30.9	65.3	0.9	100.0	4.9
Land and marine resources	49.7	45.9	1.6	100.0	2.8
Health, community services	31.6	63.0	3.2	100.0	2.8
Remainder of fields of study	38.7	49.7	7.9	100.0	3.2
Total (%)	27.8	68.4	1.5	100.0	
Number in sample ('000)	14.9	36.7	0.8		53.7

(a) Includes qualifications of training contracts with unknown AQF level

Source: NCVET matched data from the apprentice and trainee collection and 1999 VET provider collection

Large numbers of group training apprentices and trainees enrol in fields of study where a large concentration of trades can be expected (table 6.2).

- ❖ In 1999, the most popular field of study among group training apprentices was *engineering and surveying*, with over 28% of enrolments. This proportion is slightly higher than that for all apprentices and trainees (26%) and double that for VET students (14%).
- ❖ Group training apprentices are about 50% more likely to enrol in the *architecture and building* field of study than apprentices and trainees under contract with other employers. In 1999, about 15% of group training apprentices enrolled in *architecture and building* courses and training packages, while only 10% of the enrolments by apprentices and trainees under contract with other employers were in that field of study.
- ❖ Apprentices and trainees are about twice as likely to undertake training in the trades-related fields of study than are VET students. In 1999 *architecture and building* and *engineering and surveying* courses and training packages made up about 37% of enrolments by apprentices and trainees but only 19% of all enrolments in the publicly funded VET sector.
- ❖ On the other hand, apprentices and trainees are significantly less likely to enrol in *arts, humanities and social sciences, science, education, health and community services* and *business, administration and economics* courses or training packages.
- ❖ The increase in the proportion of apprenticeships and traineeships in non-trade occupations can also be observed in the provider-based training:
 - While in 1997 more than half (53%) of enrolments by apprentices and trainees were in courses associated with trades (*architecture and building* and *engineering and surveying*), this percentage dropped to 37% in 1999.
 - During the same period, enrolments in fields not associated with trade occupations have increased, for instance, in *business, administration and economics* from about 9% in 1997 to 16% in 1999, or in *health and community services* from around 4% in 1997 to over 6% in 1999.

Table 6.2: Apprentices and trainees, and VET students—course and qualification enrolments by field of study, 1999

Course and qualification enrolments	Proportion (%)		
	Group training apprentices and trainees	All apprentices and trainees	VET students
Fields of study with high concentration of trades			
Architecture, building	15.0	10.8	5.0
Engineering, surveying	28.3	26.1	13.8
Other fields of study			
Land and marine resources	5.2	5.0	5.2
Arts, humanities and social sciences	2.1	2.1	7.3
Business, administration, economics	15.4	16.4	21.4
Education	1.0	1.1	2.4
Health, community services	5.2	6.4	8.7
Law, legal studies	0.3	0.4	0.6
Science	2.4	2.3	6.3
Veterinary science, animal care	0.0	0.1	0.2
Services, hospitality, transportation	15.7	21.0	13.2
VET multi-field education	9.2	8.2	15.9
Total enrolments(%)	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number in sample ('000)	53.7	313.1	1992.2

Source: NCVET matched data from apprentice and trainee collection and 1999 VET provider collection

Similarly, areas of learning with a high concentration of trades can be identified at the module or unit of competency level. Table 6.3 shows that in 1999 apprentices and trainees were about twice as likely to be enrolled in *engineering and processing* and *built environment* subjects than VET students. These two areas accounted for almost 30% of all enrolments by apprentices and trainees.

Group training apprentices and trainees undertook even more training in those areas of learning than the whole apprentice and trainee cohort. *Engineering and processing* and *built environment* subjects accounted for over one-third of the off-the-job enrolments of group training apprentices and trainees.

Table 6.3: Apprentices and trainees, and VET students—module and unit of competency enrolments by area of learning, 1999

Module and unit of competency enrolments	Proportion (%)		
	Group training apprentices and trainees	All apprentices and trainees	VET students
Areas of learning with high concentration of trades			
Engineering and processing	22.9	20.0	11.0
Built environment	11.6	8.5	4.4
Other areas of learning			
Administration, business, economics, law	17.6	20.3	20.6
Hospitality, tourism, personal services	9.6	11.7	9.3
Social, education, employment skills	9.1	8.3	11.7
Health sciences	8.1	9.2	10.1
Mathematics, computing	7.0	6.7	13.5
Humanities	5.2	5.5	6.6
Agriculture, renewable resources	4.8	5.3	4.7
Remaining areas of learning	4.1	4.5	8.0
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number in sample ('000)	445.4	2 643.3	11 640.8

Source: NCVET matched data from apprentice and trainee collection and 1999 VET provider collection

Provider-based training load

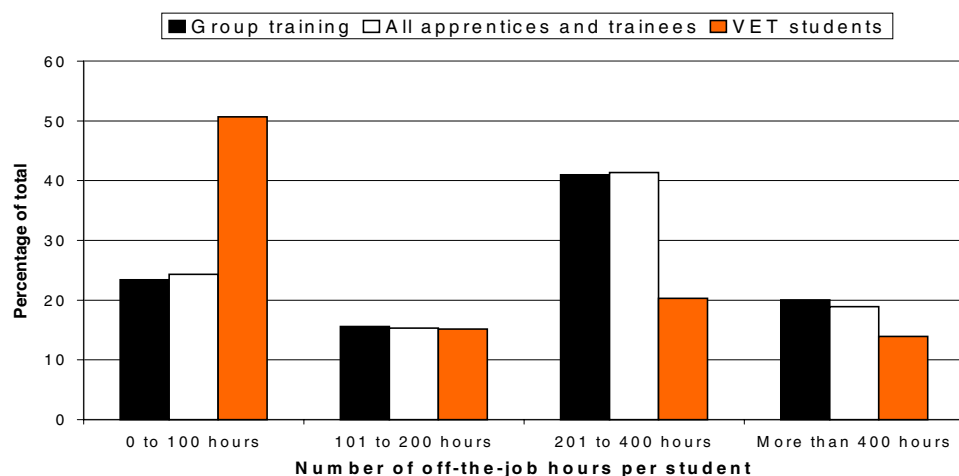
Australia's group training scheme is designed to provide apprentices and trainees with the same training opportunities as traditional apprenticeships and traineeships. The 1999 statistics on provider-based training load and outcomes demonstrate that this objective has been met: group training outcomes and provider-based training loads follow the same trends as those for the whole apprentice and trainee population. This is demonstrated in the final two sections of this chapter.

The off-the-job component of an apprenticeship and traineeship comprises an essential part of the training contract. It therefore comes as no surprise that, in 1999, apprentices and trainees on average undertook 279 provider-based training hours per person, substantially more than the average VET hours undertaken by the general VET student population (201 hours). Apprentices and trainees under contract with group training companies showed an even slightly higher training load (an average of 285 hours).

Figure 6.1 demonstrates that short training programs play a relatively small role in the provider-based training for apprentices and trainees (employed with both group training companies and other employers), a situation different from that of all VET students.

- ❖ Over 60% (61% for group training, 60% for other employers) of apprentices and trainees undertook more than 200 provider-based training hours in 1999, in contrast to just over one-third of all VET students.
- ❖ Less than a quarter of apprentices and trainees were enrolled in 100 off-the-job hours or less, while short programs of 100 hours or less were undertaken by more than half of VET students in 1999.

Figure 6.1: Percentage of apprentices and trainees and VET students, by hours of training undertaken per person, 1999



Source: NCVET matched data from apprentice and trainee collection and 1999 VET provider collection

On average, apprentices and trainees are enrolled in more modules and units of competency than VET students (table 6.4). In 1999, apprentices and trainees averaged 8.8 module/unit of competency enrolments (VET students: 5.8).

- ❖ Almost 60% of apprentices and trainees undertook more than seven modules/units of competency in 1999, by contrast with just over 30% of all VET students.
- ❖ Less than one in five apprentices were enrolled in one or two modules/units of competency only, while more than two in five VET students undertook no more than two subjects in 1999.

Table 6.4: Percentage of apprentices and trainees and VET students by number of module and unit of competency enrolments per person, 1999

Number of module and unit of competency enrolments	Proportion (%)		
	Group training apprentices and trainees	All apprentices and trainees	VET students
1 to 2	18.3	18.7	43.5
3 to 4	9.7	9.6	13.0
5 to 7	13.6	13.3	11.9
8 to 10	17.4	17.5	9.6
11 to 15	18.3	19.0	9.3
16 or more	21.7	20.9	11.8
RPL/credit transfer only clients ^(a)	0.9	1.0	0.9
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total students in sample ('000)	42.4	253.2	1647.2

(a) Each year, a small number of students enrol with VET providers for the purpose of obtaining status or credit through recognition of prior learning (RPL) or credit transfer arrangements and undertake no other official training

Source: NCVET matched data from apprentice and trainee collection and 1999 VET provider collection

Training outcomes

Outcomes in the provider-based training of apprentices and trainees (employed with both group training companies and other employers) follow a similar trend to those for all VET students (table 6.5). In 1999:

- ❖ about two-thirds of module and unit of competency enrolments by apprentices and trainees resulted in a successful outcome
- ❖ about 10% of subject enrolments had an unsuccessful outcome
- ❖ 15% of enrolments were associated with continuing studies

Table 6.5: Apprentice and trainee module and unit of competency results, 1999

Module and unit of competency outcome	Proportion (%)	
	Group training apprentices and trainees	All apprentices and trainees
Assessed—pass ^(a)	62.1	62.7
Assessed—fail	8.1	7.0
Not assessed—completed ^(a)	2.1	1.9
Not assessed—not completed	0.2	0.5
Continuing studies	14.6	14.9
Recognition of prior learning	1.6	1.9
Credit transfer	3.9	3.2
Withdrew	1.4	2.0
Not stated	5.9	5.9
Total (%)	100.0	100.0
Total ('000)	445.4	2643.3

(a) Caution should be exercised when deriving module completion rates from the data shown in this table, since the final outcomes of modules/units of competency that continue into the next collection year are not known

Source: NCVET matched data from apprentice and trainee collection and 1999 VET provider collection

Conclusion

The enduring strength of group training is its capacity to continue to grow and attract customers, its support for small- and medium-sized companies, its responsiveness to government and its capacity to create opportunities for some groups who might normally be less successful in gaining apprenticeships. Its record of achievement in terms of completions and outcomes is a testament to the capacity and quality of the program.

Nevertheless, as the apprentice and trainee system continues to change and expand, some of these strengths are subject to emerging pressures.

In particular, the growth of group training is unlikely to be sustained at its current pace without increased diversification into new and emerging occupations. Trade apprenticeships make up less than 50% of all apprenticeships and traineeships, while in group training the proportion has fallen to around two-thirds of all apprentices and trainees (62%). The trades area, the traditional focus of group training, while a strength in terms of the industry sectors it services, is likely to be a limiting factor in terms of overall capacity to expand and meet the needs of newer firms looking for different skills.

This factor may be offset to some extent if group training maintains and expands its current focus on servicing the needs of small- and medium-sized firms, given the growth of small businesses overall (need a figure here). Around 90% of group training host employers are in firms with fewer than 50 employees and over half of them employ fewer than five people. New information on group training penetration of small firms will be valuable in monitoring this situation.

Perhaps most significantly, the increasing attraction of group training for employers who may otherwise be reluctant to take on apprentices and trainees can and should be harnessed in newer areas of the economy. Moving into these areas will also mean that the structure of training for group training is likely to change in terms of the level and length of training. Furthermore, it is likely to expand opportunities for women and people from a non-English-speaking background.

In two decades group training has come a long way. It has kept pace with growth and change in the sector, and indeed, outpaced it in important areas such as completions. It has a promising future while facing the challenges of all businesses in a rapidly changing economy—to continue to grow and diversify to meet the needs of Australia's businesses and industry, group training's clients and customers.

References

- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2000a, *Estimated resident population: By sex, age and postcode, States and Territories of Australia*, cat.3201.0, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.
- 2000b, *Labour force Australia, May 2000*, cat.6203.0, AGPS, Canberra.
- ACTU–LLF (Australian Council of Trade Unions—Lend Lease Foundation) 2000, '*... you can make a difference: The Story of ACTU-Lend Lease Foundation*', written by K Schofield for ACTU-Lend Lease Foundation, Melbourne.
- ANTA (Australian National Training Authority) 1997a, 'ANTA Board report to MINCO May 1997: Attachment D—National Principles for Group Training', ANTA Board Advisory Committee on New Apprenticeships, ANTA, Brisbane.
- 1997b, 'Taking care of business: Growth through group training', issues paper, ANTA, Brisbane.
- 2001, unpublished data from survey of State and Territory STBs, ANTA, Brisbane.
- Beattie, A 1968, *The apprenticeship system in New South Wales: A report by the Commission to the Minister for Labour and Industry*, Industry Commission of New South Wales, Chairman Mr Justice AK Beattie, Sydney.
- Cully, M & Curtain, R (forthcoming), *Reasons for new apprentice non-completion*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide.
- Dumbrell, T, Finnegan, W & de Montfort, R 2001, *Locational issues in new apprenticeships*, NCVER, Adelaide.
- Grey, K, Beswick, W & O'Brien, C 1999, *Traineeship non-completion*, Research and Evaluation Branch report 1/99, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra.
- GTA (Group Training Australia) 1996, *Group Training Australia: Growth strategy 1996–2000 (Dench McClean report)*, ANTA, Brisbane.
- 2000, 'Submission to the Inquiry into the Definition of Charities and Related Organisations', Group Training Australia Ltd (December), Sydney.
- Harris, R, Willis, P, Simons, M & Underwood, F 1998, *Learning the job: Juggling the messages in on- and off-the job training*, NCVER, Adelaide.
- House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training 1991, *Skills training for the 21st century—A report on skills training: Apprenticeships and traineeships*, House of Representatives, Canberra.
- 1995, *A best kept secret—Report on the role and effectiveness of group training companies*, House of Representatives, Canberra.
- Kemp, The Hon Dr David 1996, *Ministerial Statement 20 August 1996, Training for real jobs—The Modern Apprenticeship and Traineeship System*, DETYA, Canberra.
- Kirby, P (chair) 1985, *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs*, AGPS, Canberra.
- Mathers, R 2000, *Review of the New Apprenticeships through Group Training Expansion Programme: An evaluation study for DETYA*, Roger Mathers Consulting Pty Ltd, Adelaide.
- Misko, J 1997, *Getting qualified: Dealing with lack of access to workplace training for apprentices and trainees*, NCVER, Adelaide.
- Murphy, M 1990, *Where to group training?*, Address to the National Conference of Group Training Schemes, April 1990, sponsored by ACTU–Lend Lease Foundation, Melbourne.

- NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education Research) 1994, *Apprenticeship statistics 1983–84 to 1992–93*, NCVER, Adelaide.
- 2001a, *Australian apprenticeships: Facts, fiction and futures*, NCVER, Adelaide.
- 2001b, *Employer engagement with new apprenticeships in the electrotechnology industry*, A report for the National Electrical and Communications Association and DETYA, Canberra, unpublished.
- O'Neill, S & Gish, A 2001, *Apprentices' and trainees' English language and literacy skills in workplace learning and performance: Employer and employee opinion*, NCVER, Adelaide.
- Quinn, T 1998, *Michael Ryan Memorial Address*, Group Training Australia, Queensland/ Northern Territory State Conference, Gold Coast, September, Brisbane.
- Ray, D, Beswick, W, O'Brien, C & Madigan, S 2000, *Attrition in apprenticeships: An analysis of apprentices commencing between July 1994 and June 1996*, Research and Evaluation Branch report 1/00, DETYA, Canberra.
- Robinson, C & Hughes, P 1999, *Creating a sense of place: Indigenous peoples in vocational education and training*, NCVER, Adelaide.
- Sweet, R & Hoskins, R 1989, *They take care of them: A review of group employment and training schemes*, commissioned by ACTU–Lend Lease Foundation, Dusseldorf Skills Forum, Sydney.
- Toner, P 1998, 'Trends in NSW Government apprentice intake: Courses and implications', *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, vol.24, no.2, pp.141–57.

Appendix 1

Reports and reviews on group training

- ANTA (Australian National Training Authority) 1997, *Group training funding model*, by KPMG Management Consulting Pty Ltd for ANTA, Brisbane.
- 1997b, *Group training success stories: Access and equity at work*, ANTA, Brisbane.
- 1997c, *Taking care of business: Growth through group training—Issues paper*, ANTA, Brisbane.
- Dench McClean Associates 1996, *Group training Australia growth strategy 1996–2000*, November, Group Training Australia Ltd, Canberra.
- DEETYA (Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs) 1997, *Labour market for apprentices—employer and group training company experience in recruiting apprentices*, DEETYA, Canberra.
- GTA (Group Training Australia) 1999, *New apprenticeships: Increasing employer involvement through group training—Evaluation report for Group Training Australia*, by the Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia (COSBOA), GTA, Sydney.
- Hodgson, F 1999, *Support models to assist new apprenticeship completions*, a project commissioned by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra.
- House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training 1991, *Skills training for the 21st century—A report on skills training: Apprenticeships and traineeships*, House of Representatives, Canberra.
- 1995, *A best kept secret—Report on the role and effectiveness of group training companies*, House of Representatives, Canberra.
- Mathers, R 2000, *Review of the new apprenticeships through Group Training Expansion Programme: An evaluation study for DETYA*, Roger Mathers Consulting Pty Ltd, Adelaide.
- NSW Department of Education and Training, 2000, *Group training management information needs analysis*, project report, NSW Department of Education and Training, Sydney.
- OPCETE (Office of Post Compulsory Education, Training and Employment) 2000, *Managing diversity in group training companies 2000*, by GTA (Vic) and Access Training and Employment Centre, for State Training Board of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Sweet, R & Hoskins, R 1989, *They take care of them: A review of group employment and training schemes*, commissioned by ACTU–Lend Lease Foundation, Dusseldorf Skills Forum, Sydney.

Appendix 2

Group training apprentice and trainee statistics

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) publishes apprentice and trainee statistics on a quarterly and annual basis. NCVER has been responsible for publishing national apprentice and trainee statistics since 1993. These statistics are published in various editions of Australian apprentice and trainee statistics.

Revised and updated Australian apprentice and trainee statistics are also available on the NCVER website at www.ncver.edu.au.

The apprentice and trainee statistics used in this report, including those for group training, have been drawn from information available in NCVER's March 2001 Apprentice and Trainee collection.

Information requests relating to apprenticeships and traineeships in general should be forwarded to NCVER directly or by email: ats_req@ncver.edu.au.

It should be noted that all figures have been rounded hence they may not sum to the total.

Table A1: The number of group training apprentice and trainee commencements, numbers in training and completions, 1995–2000

Year	Number of commencements in 12 months ending 30 June	Number in training at 30 June	Number of completions in 12 months ending 30 June
1995	8 490	17 490	2 480
1996	10 850	20 700	3 670
1997	13 830	23 550	6 180
1998	20 230	28 720	8 040
1999	25 650	34 380	10 070
2000	26 500	37 820	11 760

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A2: The type of employer of commencing apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Employer type	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of commencements					
Private sector	46 770	59 620	75 150	96 710	156 590	159 470
Group training	8 490	10 850	13 830	20 230	25 650	26 500
Commonwealth Government	1 310	1 650	1 320	880	970	1 270
State Government	2 330	2 700	3 180	5 200	7 990	6 740
Other government ^(a)	1 000	1 250	1 860	2 050	4 070	3 400
Total	59 960	76 140	95 440	125 400	195 510	197 980
	Proportion of apprenticeships & traineeships (%)					
Private sector	78.0	78.3	78.7	77.1	80.1	80.5
Group training	14.2	14.2	14.5	16.1	13.1	13.4
Commonwealth Government	2.2	2.2	1.4	0.7	0.5	0.6
State Government	3.9	3.5	3.3	4.1	4.1	3.4
Other government ^(a)	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.6	2.1	1.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Other government covers local government and government business enterprises

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A3: The type of employer of apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Employer type	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number in training at 30 June					
Private sector	109 310	125 700	137 910	152 810	202 570	224 260
Group training	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Commonwealth Government	2 180	2 590	2 340	1 710	1 340	1 420
State Government	4 450	4 700	4 790	6 300	9 170	8 890
Other government ^(a)	2 390	2 720	3 180	3 090	5 030	5 040
Not known	110	120	130	300	310	640
Total	135 920	156 530	171 880	192 920	252 800	278 070
	Proportion of apprenticeships & traineeships (%)					
Private sector	80.4	80.3	80.2	79.2	80.1	80.6
Group training	12.9	13.2	13.7	14.9	13.6	13.6
Commonwealth Government	1.6	1.7	1.4	0.9	0.5	0.5
State Government	3.3	3.0	2.8	3.3	3.6	3.2
Other government ^(a)	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.6	2.0	1.8
Not known	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Other government covers local government and government business enterprises

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A4: The number of group training apprenticeships and traineeships by occupational group, 1995–2000

Occupational groups		Number in training at 30 June					
		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
1	Managers & administrators	230	490	630	650	730	730
2	Professionals	90	60	70	280	430	600
3	Associate professionals	40	140	380	620	900	1070
4	Total tradespersons & related occupations	15 410	16 510	17 520	18 760	21 230	23 650
41	<i>Mech. & fabrication eng. tradespersons</i>	2 020	2 360	2 790	3 030	3 210	3 070
42	<i>Automotive tradespersons</i>	2 160	2 370	2 550	2 910	3 400	3 870
43	<i>Electrical & electronics tradespersons</i>	2 030	280	2 970	3 110	3 640	3 920
44	<i>Construction tradespersons</i>	5 600	5 410	5 280	5 580	6 410	7 790
45	<i>Food tradespersons</i>	2 460	2 710	2 750	2 870	3 090	3 160
46	<i>Skilled agricultural & horticultural workers</i>	460	470	470	530	550	620
49	<i>Other tradespersons & related workers</i>	690	700	700	730	920	1 210
5	Advanced clerical & service workers	(a)	40	30	20	30	20
6	Intermediate clerical, sales & service workers	1 070	2 000	2 710	4 770	5 990	6 130
7	Intermediate production & transport workers	40	100	200	300	490	680
8	Elementary clerical, sales & service workers	300	550	770	1 420	2 070	2 140
9	Labourers & related workers	310	830	1 260	1 900	2 530	2 800
Total		17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A5: The duration of group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000

Expected duration of training contract	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
1 year or less	2 220	4 180	5 980	8 860	10 220	9 670
Over 1 year and up to and including 2 years	1 550	1 460	1 630	2 670	4 670	4 950
Over 2 years and up to and including 3 years	2 090	2 140	2 070	2 670	3 460	4 230
Over 3 years and up to and including 4 years	10 460	11 600	12 530	13 080	14 690	17 710
Over 4 years	1 160	1 320	1 340	1 440	1 350	1 260
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships & traineeships (%)						
1 year or less	12.7	20.2	25.4	30.9	29.7	25.6
Over 1 year and up to and including 2 years	8.9	7.0	6.9	9.3	13.6	13.1
Over 2 years and up to and including 3 years	11.9	10.3	8.8	9.3	10.1	11.2
Over 3 years and up to and including 4 years	59.8	56.1	53.2	45.5	42.7	46.8
Over 4 years	6.6	6.4	5.7	5.0	3.9	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A6: The level of qualifications of group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000

AQF qualification level	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
Certificate I	60	40	40	70	40	10
Certificate II	1 240	3 170	4 500	7 130	9 440	9 980
Certificate III	14 470	15 990	17 540	20 640	24 080	27 190
Certificate IV or higher	100	60	180	270	550	510
Not known	1 620	1 430	1 290	620	280	130
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships & traineeships (%)						
Certificate I	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0
Certificate II	7.1	15.3	19.1	24.8	27.4	26.4
Certificate III	82.8	77.3	74.5	71.9	70.0	71.9
Certificate IV or higher	0.6	0.3	0.8	1.0	1.6	1.3
Not known	9.2	6.9	5.5	2.2	0.8	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A7: Full- and part-time group training apprenticeships and traineeships, 1995–2000

Mode of apprenticeship or traineeship	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
Full time	15 750	18 870	21 540	26 240	29 960	32 570
Part time	350	440	510	1 290	3 710	4 840
Mode not known	1 390	1 390	1 500	1 200	720	410
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships & traineeships (%)						
Full time	90.1	91.2	91.5	91.4	87.1	86.1
Part time	2.0	2.1	2.1	4.5	10.8	12.8
Mode not known	8.0	6.7	6.4	4.2	2.1	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A8: The gender of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Gender	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
Male	15 190	17 580	19 450	22 690	26 430	29 070
Female	2 290	3 120	4 110	6 030	7 960	8 750
Persons	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships & traineeships (%)						
Male	86.9	84.9	82.6	79.0	76.9	76.9
Female	13.1	15.1	17.4	21.0	23.1	23.1
Persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A9: The age of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Age	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
15–19 years ^(a)	9 340	10 120	11 440	14 430	18 790	20 920
20–24 years	7 290	9 040	9 910	10 990	11 780	12 750
25–39 years	800	1 350	1 820	2 690	3 030	3 200
40 years and over	60	190	390	610	780	940
Persons	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprentices & trainees (%)						
15–19 years ^(a)	53.4	48.9	48.6	50.3	54.7	55.4
20–24 years	41.7	43.7	42.1	38.3	34.3	33.7
25–39 years	4.6	6.5	7.7	9.4	8.8	8.5
40 years and over	0.3	0.9	1.6	2.1	2.2	2.5
Persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes a very small number aged less than 15 years

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A10: The gender and age of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Gender & age	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Males	Number in training at 30 June					
15–19 years ^(a)	8 060	8 560	9 340	11 430	14 420	16 020
20–24 years	6 440	7 870	8 510	9 060	9 680	10 620
25–39 years	660	1 040	1 360	1 880	2 000	2 090
40 years and over	40	110	230	320	330	330
Total males	15 190	17 580	19 450	22 690	26 430	29 070
Males	Proportion of apprentices & trainees (%)					
15–19 years ^(a)	53.1	48.7	48.0	50.4	54.6	55.1
20–24 years	42.4	44.8	43.8	39.9	36.6	36.5
25–39 years	4.3	5.9	7.0	8.3	7.6	7.2
40 years and over	0.3	0.6	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.1
Total males	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Females	Number in training at 30 June					
15–19 years ^(a)	1 280	1 550	2 100	3 010	4 380	4 920
20–24 years	850	1 170	1 400	1 940	2 100	2 130
25–39 years	150	320	460	810	1 030	1 100
40 years and over	20	80	160	280	450	600
Total females	2 290	3 120	4 110	6 030	7 960	8 750
Females	Proportion of apprentices & trainees (%)					
15–19 years ^(a)	55.6	49.8	51.1	49.9	55.0	56.2
20–24 years	37.0	37.6	34.1	32.1	26.4	24.3
25–39 years	6.4	10.1	11.1	13.3	13.0	12.6
40 years and over	0.9	2.5	3.8	4.7	5.6	6.9
Total females	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons	Number in training at 30 June					
15–19 years ^(a)	9 340	10 120	11 440	14 430	18 790	20 940
20–24 years	7 290	9 040	9 910	10 990	11 780	12 750
25–39 years	800	1 350	1 820	2 690	3 030	3 200
40 years and over	60	190	390	610	780	940
Total persons	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Persons	Proportion of apprentices & trainees (%)					
15–19 years ^(a)	53.4	48.9	48.6	50.3	54.7	55.4
20–24 years	41.7	43.7	42.1	38.3	34.3	33.7
25–39 years	4.6	6.5	7.7	9.4	8.8	8.5
40 years and over	0.3	0.9	1.6	2.1	2.2	2.5
Total persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes a very small number aged less than 15 years

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A11: Highest level of previous education attainment of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Highest education level	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
Degree/postgraduate diploma	10	10	20	70	110	180
Associate diploma/undergraduate diploma	20	30	40	70	100	110
Trade/technical certificate	190	200	240	400	500	510
Other certificate	200	460	790	1 490	2 070	2 190
Other unspecified post-secondary	50	90	90	540	960	1 120
Year 12	8 310	9 630	10 900	12 020	13 640	14 470
Years 10 or 11	7 830	8 880	10 210	12 600	15 100	17 020
Year 9 or lower	300	540	710	980	1 170	1 370
Not known	570	860	560	550	740	850
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships & traineeships (%)						
Degree/postgraduate diploma	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.5
Associate diploma/undergraduate diploma	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3
Trade/technical certificate	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.4
Other certificate	1.1	2.2	3.4	5.2	6.0	5.8
Other unspecified post-secondary	0.3	0.4	0.4	1.9	2.8	3.0
Year 12	47.5	46.5	46.3	41.9	39.7	38.3
Years 10 or 11	44.8	42.9	43.4	43.9	43.9	45.0
Year 9 or lower	1.7	2.6	3.0	3.4	3.4	3.6
Not known	3.3	4.1	2.4	1.9	2.2	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A12: The State or Territory of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

State/Territory	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
New South Wales	4 180	5 110	5 610	6 540	8 480	9 110
Victoria	4 360	5 460	6 010	7 230	8 210	8 590
Queensland	4 390	4 850	5 480	6 730	8 860	10 360
Western Australia	1 940	2 320	3 120	4 230	4 230	4 640
South Australia	1 390	1 390	1 550	2 000	2 250	2 590
Tasmania	610	770	910	1 230	1 370	1 500
Australian Capital Territory	350	440	470	460	650	670
Northern Territory	270	350	410	310	320	360
Australia	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships and traineeships (%)						
New South Wales	23.9	24.7	23.8	22.8	24.7	24.1
Victoria	24.9	26.4	25.5	25.2	23.9	22.7
Queensland	25.1	23.4	23.3	23.4	25.8	27.4
Western Australia	11.1	11.2	13.3	14.7	12.3	12.3
South Australia	8.0	6.7	6.6	7.0	6.6	6.8
Tasmania	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.3	4.0	4.0
Australian Capital Territory	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.9	1.8
Northern Territory	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.1	0.9	1.0
Australia	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A13: The geographical location of group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Geographic region	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
Capital city	8 480	9 850	11 350	13 870	16 140	18 050
Other metropolitan	1 250	1 540	1 690	1 820	2 280	2 790
Rural area	6 280	7 450	8 060	9 660	11 870	13 120
Remote area	950	1 180	1 650	1 950	2 170	2 270
Interstate	210	320	350	400	380	440
Outside Australia	-	-	(a)	(a)	-	-
Not known	330	370	460	1 020	1 540	1 160
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships and traineeships (%)						
Capital city	48.5	47.6	48.2	48.3	47.0	47.7
Other metropolitan	7.1	7.4	7.2	6.3	6.6	7.4
Rural area	35.9	36.0	34.2	33.6	34.5	34.7
Remote area	5.4	5.7	7.0	6.8	6.3	6.0
Interstate	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.2
Outside Australia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not known	1.9	1.8	1.9	3.6	4.5	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A14: Indigenous and non-Indigenous group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Aboriginality	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
Indigenous	260	510	830	1 290	1 250	1 270
Non-Indigenous ^(a)	17 230	20 190	22 720	27 430	33 140	36 550
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprenticeships and traineeships (%)						
Indigenous	1.5	2.4	3.5	4.5	3.6	3.4
Non-Indigenous ^(a)	98.5	97.6	96.5	95.5	96.4	96.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes those where Aboriginality was not stated

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A15: Group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, 1995–2000

Disability	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
Disability	140	220	380	560	950	1 270
No disability ^(a)	17 350	20 480	23 170	28 160	33 430	36 550
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprentices & trainees (%)						
Disability	0.8	1.1	1.6	1.9	2.8	3.3
No disability ^(a)	99.2	98.9	98.4	98.1	97.2	96.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes any undisclosed disabilities/disability not stated

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A16: The main languages spoken at home by group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Main languages spoken	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Number in training at 30 June						
English only	8 480	11 070	14 300	20 060	28 790	33 650
Other languages	390	600	790	900	1 380	1 430
Not known	8 620	9 030	8 460	7 750	4 210	2 740
Total	17 490	20 700	23 550	28 720	34 380	37 820
Proportion of apprentices & trainees (%)						
English only	48.5	53.5	60.7	69.9	83.7	89.0
Other languages	2.2	2.9	3.3	3.1	4.0	3.8
Not known	49.3	43.6	35.9	27.0	12.3	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A17: The type of employer of completing apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Employer type	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
Private sector	25 720	24 190	33 720	41 180	48 010	64 500
Group training	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
Government ^(a)	4 660	3 870	4 260	4 730	5 260	7 330
Total	32 860	31 720	44 230	54 020	63 460	83 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
Private sector	78.3	76.3	76.2	76.2	75.7	77.0
Group training	7.5	11.6	14.0	14.9	15.9	14.0
Government ^(a)	14.2	12.2	9.6	8.8	8.3	8.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes Commonwealth, State, local governments and government business enterprises

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A18: Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by qualification, 1995–2000

Level of qualification	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
Certificate I	(a)	30	30	20	50	20
Certificate II	440	770	2 180	2 940	4 000	5 170
Certificate III	1 630	2 380	3 450	4 440	5 610	6 220
Certificate IV or higher	(a)	110	50	140	160	240
Not known	400	370	470	500	260	120
Total	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
Certificate I	0.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.1
Certificate II	17.8	21.1	35.3	36.5	39.7	43.9
Certificate III	65.9	64.8	55.8	55.3	55.7	52.9
Certificate IV or higher	0.1	3.1	0.7	1.8	1.6	2.0
Not known	16.1	10.2	7.6	6.2	2.6	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A19: Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by occupation, 1995–2000

Occupational group	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
Managers & administrators	10	110	300	390	430	430
Professionals	0	120	50	50	150	190
Associate professionals	30	40	80	210	350	430
Tradespersons & related workers	1 840	2 400	3 290	4 030	4 060	4 120
Advanced clerical & service workers	(a)	(a)	30	20	20	(a)
Intermediate clerical, sales & service workers	430	710	1 460	2 000	3 180	3 740
Elementary clerical, sales & service workers	(a)	20	50	110	180	270
Intermediate production & transport workers	100	150	420	520	870	1140
Labourers & related workers	50	120	500	730	850	1430
Total	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
Manager & administrators	0.5	2.9	4.9	4.8	4.3	3.7
Professionals	0.0	3.2	0.8	0.6	1.5	1.6
Associate professionals	1.1	1.1	1.3	2.6	3.5	3.6
Tradespersons & related workers	74.3	65.4	53.3	50.1	40.3	35.0
Advanced clerical & service workers	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.1
Intermediate clerical, sales & service workers	17.5	19.3	23.7	24.8	31.5	31.8
Elementary clerical, sales & service workers	0.2	0.5	0.8	1.3	1.8	2.3
Intermediate production & transport workers	4.0	4.2	6.8	6.5	8.6	9.7
Labourers & related workers	2.1	3.3	8.0	9.0	8.4	12.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A20: Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by gender, 1995–2000

Gender	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
Males	1 860	2 670	4 530	5 720	6 610	7 360
Females	620	1 000	1 650	2 320	3 460	4 400
Persons	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
Males	74.9	72.9	73.3	71.1	65.7	62.6
Females	25.1	27.1	26.7	28.9	34.3	37.4
Persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A21: Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by age, 1995–2000

Age	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
15–19 years ^(a)	380	600	1 180	1 660	2 340	3 390
20–24 years	1 920	2 670	4 110	5 100	5 870	6 220
25–39 years	160	370	760	1 040	1 480	1 650
40 years and over	20	20	130	240	390	500
Total	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of total completions (%)					
15–19 years ^(a)	15.3	16.4	19.1	20.6	23.2	28.8
20–24 years	77.6	72.9	66.5	63.5	58.3	52.9
25–39 years	6.3	10.1	12.3	13.0	14.7	14.0
40 years and over	0.8	0.6	2.1	2.9	3.8	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes a very small number aged less than 15 years

Source: NCVER apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A22: The highest level of previous education attainment of completing group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Highest previous educational attainment	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Tertiary	Number of completions					
Degree/postgraduate diploma	0	(a)	(a)	10	40	60
Associate diploma/undergraduate diploma	(a)	(a)	10	10	40	40
Trade/technician certificate	10	20	60	100	140	170
Other certificate	(a)	20	130	250	540	960
Unspecified post-secondary	10	(a)	20	90	170	280
<i>Sub-total tertiary</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>220</i>	<i>460</i>	<i>920</i>	<i>1 520</i>
Schooling						
Year 12	970	1 740	3 040	4 130	4 790	5 350
Years 10 or 11	1 340	1 650	2 390	3 040	3 880	4 190
Year 9 or lower	40	50	180	240	290	320
<i>Sub-total secondary schooling</i>	<i>2 340</i>	<i>3 440</i>	<i>5 610</i>	<i>7 420</i>	<i>8 960</i>	<i>9 860</i>
Unknown	110	170	340	170	190	190
Total	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
Tertiary	Proportion of completions (%)					
Degree/postgraduate diploma	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.5
Associate diploma/undergraduate diploma	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4
Trade/technician certificate	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.5
Other certificate	0.1	0.6	2.0	3.0	5.4	8.3
Unspecified post-secondary	0.5	0.2	0.4	1.1	1.6	2.4
<i>Sub-total tertiary</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>6.1</i>	<i>10.3</i>	<i>15.4</i>
Schooling						
Year 12	39.1	47.4	49.2	51.4	47.6	46.2
Years 10 or 11	53.9	45.0	38.6	37.8	38.5	36.2
Year 9 or lower	1.5	1.4	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.8
<i>Sub-total secondary schooling</i>	<i>94.4</i>	<i>93.8</i>	<i>90.8</i>	<i>92.3</i>	<i>89.0</i>	<i>85.3</i>
Unknown	4.3	4.6	5.6	2.1	1.9	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A23: Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by State and Territory, 1995–2000

State/Territory	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
New South Wales	520	660	1 550	1 920	2 450	2 860
Victoria	650	1 130	1 870	2 230	2 530	2 790
Queensland	690	950	1 370	1 840	2 260	2 880
Western Australia	190	370	500	810	1 230	1 430
South Australia	220	260	370	530	600	790
Tasmania	160	190	320	410	720	690
Australian Capital Territory	(a)	40	90	130	150	210
Northern Territory	50	60	110	170	130	110
Australia	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
New South Wales	20.9	18.0	25.1	23.9	24.3	24.3
Victoria	26.1	30.8	30.2	27.7	25.1	23.7
Queensland	27.9	25.9	22.2	22.9	22.5	24.5
Western Australia	7.5	10.2	8.2	10.0	12.2	12.1
South Australia	9.0	7.2	5.9	6.6	5.9	6.7
Tasmania	6.4	5.2	5.1	5.1	7.1	5.9
Australian Capital Territory	0.3	1.2	1.5	1.7	1.5	1.8
Northern Territory	2.0	1.6	1.7	2.1	1.3	1.0
Australia	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A24: Group training apprenticeship and traineeship completions by geographic location, 1995–2000

Geographic location	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
Capital city	1 190	1 860	3 010	3 880	4 890	5 860
Other metropolitan	180	230	490	650	710	820
Rural area	930	1 300	2 220	2 800	3 690	4 270
Remote area	150	200	280	490	610	670
Other ^(a)	30	80	170	210	180	160
Total	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
Capital city	47.9	50.7	48.8	48.3	48.6	49.8
Other metropolitan	7.4	6.3	7.9	8.1	7.0	6.9
Rural area	37.6	35.4	36.0	34.8	36.6	36.3
Remote area	6.1	5.4	4.6	6.1	6.1	5.7
Other ^(a)	1.0	2.2	2.8	2.7	1.8	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes interstate, overseas and not stated
Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A25: Indigenous and non-Indigenous group training apprentice and trainee completions, 1995–2000

Aboriginality	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
Indigenous	10	40	140	260	500	360
Non-Indigenous ^(a)	2 470	3 630	6 040	7 770	9 570	11 400
Total all persons	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
Indigenous	0.4	1.1	2.3	3.3	5.0	3.1
Non-Indigenous ^(a)	99.6	98.9	97.7	96.7	95.0	96.9
Total all persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Includes those where Aboriginality was not stated
Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A26: Completing group training apprentices and trainees reporting a disability, 1995–2000

Disability	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
Disability	(a)	20	30	90	150	260
No disability ^(b)	2 470	3 650	6 150	7 950	9 930	11 500
Total	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
Disability	0.3	0.4	0.5	1.1	1.5	2.2
No disability ^(b)	99.7	99.6	99.5	98.9	98.5	97.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Represents figures between one and nine inclusive

(b) Includes any undisclosed disabilities/disability not stated

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection

Table A27: The main languages spoken at home by completing group training apprentices and trainees, 1995–2000

Main languages spoken	12 months ending 30 June					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
	Number of completions					
English only	680	1 300	2 500	4 170	6 610	9 780
Other languages	40	50	190	270	350	570
Not known	1 760	2 310	3 480	3 600	3 120	1 410
Total	2 480	3 670	6 180	8 040	10 070	11 760
	Proportion of completions (%)					
English only	27.6	35.5	40.5	51.9	65.6	83.1
Other languages	1.4	1.4	3.1	3.3	3.5	4.9
Not known	71.0	63.1	56.4	44.8	30.9	12.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NCVET apprentice and trainee data collection



The National Centre for Vocational Education Research is Australia's primary research and development organisation in the field of vocational education and training.

NCVER undertakes and manages research programs and monitors the performance of Australia's training system.

NCVER provides a range of information aimed at improving the quality of training at all levels.

ISBN 0 87397 784 X print edition
ISBN 0 87397 785 8 web edition