

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

A message from Victorian Institute of Teaching Chairperson Don Paproth

Dear Colleague,

Welcome back to Term 2. I hope that it proves rewarding and stimulating for you.

Today I'd like to talk to you about some of the changes that have happened here at the Institute which keep us on a 'continuous improvement' path.

At the start of 2012 I presented a simple set of goals to the Council and the senior staff of the VIT. It was a straightforward, uncomplicated and *doable* list of aspirations. It read:

By the end of this term of Council

- Our purpose will be clearly articulated
- Our purpose will be understood by the profession
- Our purpose will be accepted by the profession
- Through our work, in areas such as standards for professional practice and Codes of Conduct and Ethics, we will contribute to the professional practice of teachers
- Our processes and practices will be efficient and responsive to the needs and expectations of teachers, schools and the community.

While we face the challenge of working within a legislative framework that can limit the flexibility that the Institute can respond to varying situations, I believe that we have made progress in the way we communicate with and respond to teachers, schools and the community.

The first step in this process was to modify the language that we use to communicate with the profession. Our communication style is now designed to foster cooperation in order to firstly develop a relationship, and secondly to achieve compliance. We try not to be confrontational; our desire is to inform, to listen and to respond. A significant part of this has been our consultation with all sectors regarding key issues and our performance. There will always be challenges when you must administer the law and advise accordingly, but I believe we are doing so now in a more sensitive and efficient manner.

We listened to teachers and principals about the frustration you experienced in trying to contact us by telephone and email in order to get immediate informed answers to your questions.

While I could quote a raft of statistics on our improved performance in this area, put simply we now answer over 80% of our calls in under 20 seconds and have less than 3% of our calls abandoned i.e. when a person decides not to wait to be answered. Even in our peak period, the “on hold time” was usually around 2-3 minutes. We have increased our ability to ramp up our service during the busy period so during the peak period we answered in excess of 1000 calls a day and still provided these high service levels, while during the non-peak period we respond to approximately 200 calls per day. I am now confident that if someone says that they can’t get through to us, it is most unlikely to be the case.

We answer our email inquiries within 2 days - mostly within 24 hours - and have provided more training to our customer service team to ensure that you get the right answer the first time.

We registered around 4,500 graduates before the start of the school year, and the only graduates who were not registered were those who had not completed their application for registration. We hope that helps you in ensuring that your graduates are registered and ready for the start of the school year.

We processed around 115,000 payments of the annual fee, 25,000 National Police History Checks and 80,000 renewals of registration as well as thousands of teachers completing their requirements to progress to registration from provisional registration.

As you can imagine and see from the numbers above we deal in very high volumes and if we do make an error I am confident that we deal with your query in a positive and responsive way - if we make an error we will fix it.

The following matters in regard to our performance are also worthy of consideration:

- We are developing a new website that will be launched in July this year. We are hoping that the website will make it even easier for you and your staff to find the information you need in relation to the Institute and registration.
- The introduction of early childhood teachers into the teaching profession is an exciting opportunity for both those teachers and for parents to be able to be confident that the person working in an early childhood setting is appropriately qualified and has met the same suitability tests as the rest of the teaching profession. This has provided us with an opportunity to further review our registration cards
- Building on the improved quality of card we introduced two years ago, we will now be issuing a different coloured card for each category of registration so you can identify at a glance whether a teacher holds provisional, non-practising registration or permission to teach. We will provide you with more information on this innovation later in the year.

- We are hoping to be able to advise you of significant streamlining of the National Police History Check process later in the year. I know one particular principal colleague who will be overjoyed, and might even stop emailing me on the issue!
- While we are on about good news: principals in non-government schools are now able to certify documents for their staff and members of the public. Government school principals have been able to do this for decades but because of a wording anomaly in the legislation, their Catholic and independent school colleagues have not been able to. We have made representation to government to remove this anachronism on many occasions. It's not a really big deal but it does make life a little easier on occasions, particularly when you no longer have to send a staff member to the local JP or pharmacist to certify their documents.

There is more work to be done but I am pleased with how we are tracking.

Three year trained teachers

There are still a few teachers who completed a three year qualification some years ago, who need to complete their fourth year of study. We advertised a few years back of an approved means by which these teachers could achieve their final year of study with minimum of expense and effort.

If you have teachers who are in this category please follow the link provided. I believe that this opportunity might not exist in the near future. [Link for more information.](#)

As ever, I invite any principal who wishes to discuss this email or any Institute matter to contact me directly at the Institute on 8601 6120 or by email at Donald.Paproth@vit.vic.edu.au. I am also happy to speak to principal networks or other groups.

Kind regards



Don Paproth
Chairperson