

Report from DATTA Vic (formerly TEAV) for ACET November 2007

Change of name

At a special general meeting in June, a motion was passed that the Technology Education Association of Victoria (TEAV) change its title to Design and Technology Teachers Association Victoria trading as DATTA Vic. The main impetus for this change was to identify the association with a learning area increasingly gaining recognition throughout the world. It was also seen as a means of distinguishing the area from Information and Communications Technology (ICT). It was noted that two other technology associations in Australia had changed their titles to include 'DATTA' and the intention that ACET would change to DATTA Australia.

Membership

Break down of membership as at October 2007:

Complimentary	18	Schools	
Individual	127	Government	153
Organisation	12	Independent	39
Primary	36	Catholic	38
Retired	3	Other	25
Secondary	219	Total	255
Student	67		
Total	482		

Funding

TEAV has been fortunate to receive state government funding through the Strategic Partnerships program of the Department of Education (now known as Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – DEECD). DATTA Vic will be required to apply next year for funding for 2009 – 2011. We have been made aware that future funding will be subject to linkages made to government directions and DEECD initiatives, such as Principles of Teaching and Learning (POLT), improving literacy and numeracy, and linkage to science and mathematics.

Funds are raised through membership subscriptions, the annual conference, teacher professional learning, student workshops, and publications. However these alone do not adequately support our staff.

We have recently been made aware that the Victorian Institute of Teaching is setting up a portal to register all teacher professional development mapped against teaching standards. Teachers will be required to undertake 100 hours of professional development over 5 years. Teachers will be able to search the website for available professional development offered by teacher associations; however this will be at significant cost to teacher associations.

Staffing

The Education Officer of approximately 17 months played a very active role in organising and promoting TEAV/DATTA Vic activities. Unfortunately, the education officer resigned

in October. At this stage it is intended to employ a couple of people on a casual, part-time basis for specific projects until early next year, when the situation will be evaluated.

We currently employ an office administrator four days a week – previously three days, but this has been increased due to the resignation of the education officer. The office administrator deals with phone calls, membership, payments, and liaises regularly with members and the DATTA Vic Board through mailing lists.

DATTA Vic Board

The elected President in 2006, Kay Branson retired from the role during the year, as did the Vice President, Gail Boddy. Patricia Hynes was nominated to take Kay's place and Karen McVilly accepted the role of vice president. The president is also the DATTA Vic public officer, responsible for submitting compliance documents to the Department of Justice and Consumer Affairs.

The Annual General Meeting was held in October. The treasurer and a long serving member of the Board who has had a range of responsibilities including president and vice president, Kate Baulch, did not stand for renomination; however it was pleasing that a number of new board members were elected. The new committee has primary school representation, but mainly comprises secondary school teachers from materials and systems technology areas, mostly from government schools, including some from regional areas of Victoria. It is somewhat disappointing that there is no tertiary representation (i.e. pre-service technology educators) on the Board.

Following the formation of the new Board a planning day was conducted to establish the focus, activities and priorities of the association for the coming year. The mission statement and constitution were briefly discussed; and in small teams, ideas brainstormed for future publications, professional development and student workshops.

Annual conference

It had earlier been planned that a primary teacher conference would occur in March 2008, however due to time constraints and the resignation of the Education Officer, it was decided instead that the annual two day conference should have one day that included a number of primary teacher workshops. The 2008 annual conference theme 'Making Connections' will focus on connections between early, middle and later years, connecting with applied learners, connecting design and technology with other learning areas and connecting with industry (industry visits are planned as part of the conference).

The 2007 annual conference titled Linking Thinking, Learning and Doing was very successful with over 300 participants (over two days); two excellent keynote speakers and the launch of the DEECD OHS safety report and short course in Safe use of Machinery in Technology Teaching. The report makes a number of recommendations including that all teachers undertake approximately a one week training program in the safe use of plant in technology workshops, unless they can prove prior competency. A wide range of seminars and workshops were offered, many by practicing teachers. Examples of workshops included hydrogen fuel cells technology in the classroom, CAD workshops, Picaxe and robotics, textiles and wood skills workshops. The conference successfully attracts regional members, however there were few primary participants.

Teacher Professional Learning

TEAV/DATTA Vic has run a variety of Professional Learning seminars and workshops during the past year. TEAV was contracted by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) to conduct VCE Implementation workshops for new VCE studies Design and Technology and Systems Engineering (formerly Systems and Technology). These workshops were very well attended and conducted both in metropolitan and regional Victoria. Other workshops to support the VCE studies were conducted during the year, including those with emphasis on aspects of assessment, such as the major folio and production work (School-assessed Task). Workshops were also conducted to assist teachers in the implementation of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) – focusing on Design, Creativity and Technology. Other workshops focused on computer-aided design and microcontrollers. A full day workshop to prepare pre-service technology teachers for seeking employment was also conducted in a regional and a city location.

Student workshops

Student workshops have increased in popularity and are tied to funding through the Strategic Partnerships program of the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). Workshops focused on preparing for the School-assessed Task (SAT) – the major project and folio work (popular with textiles/fashion students) and exam revision seminars. Both were very well attended.

Publications

The TEAV/DATTA Vic newsletter is produced once per term. The newsletter contains an outline of planned teacher professional learning, student workshops and forthcoming events. This is still produced as a hard copy and sent to members/schools.

The TEAV/DATTA Vic journal *Technotes* (published twice a year) was first published electronically in August 2007. The journal on CD ROM was well received by those members who provided feedback, although a few prefer the hard copy publication. It has been decided that future issues will be electronic, as this format provides greater flexibility in layout and use of colour.

At the Annual Conference, VCE Design and Technology Support Materials were launched. Experienced teachers were contracted to write the material, which was published as a set of four books a CD containing all of the four units. The support material has been very well received and many copies have been purchased by teachers/schools.

It is anticipated that curriculum support documentation for the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) will be a focus in 2007-08 to assist teachers in implementing and reporting on the VELs which is a requirement in 2008.

Website

The website is in the process of being updated to reflect the current name of the association. It's organisation and usability will be improved.

The need to rebrand the association by updating the logo was discussed at the recent DATTA Vic committee planning meeting. At this stage it is likely that we will employ a young graphic designer to work over a period of time on the TEAV – DATTA Vic rebranding that will eventually flow through to all publications.