Developing Performance Framework pilot
Executive Summary
Interim Report
June 2006 – December 2006
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Education, Training and the Arts (DETA) is committed to creating a culture where our employees understand what their key activities and tasks are, feel supported by their supervisors and colleagues, have open discussions about professional practice and aspire to keep learning and getting better at what they do. To this end, the 2006–2007 Ministerial Portfolio Statement includes a commitment to pilot the Developing Performance Framework for all employees in the department.

The Developing Performance Framework provides a practical and collaborative process and tools for employees and team leaders to:

- Negotiate key responsibilities, including tasks, timelines, and performance;
- Touch base regularly about task progress and discuss new priorities or issues as they arise;
- Provide on-the-job coaching and formal feedback on performance;
- Clarify professional development to be undertaken;
- Discuss current and future professional and career goals and how these goals might be achieved;
- Link performance to rewards and recognition; and
- Continue to develop strengths and discuss areas for improvement and support options.

From June 2006 to June 2007, the Framework is being piloted in 23 schools and work units across the department. The participants that are involved in the pilot in these schools and work units are a representative sample from across the Department's employee groups. The representative sample is made up of school leaders (principals, deputy principals, HODs, HOCs, HOSES), primary and secondary school teachers, teacher aides, administrative officers (school based), registrars, janitor/groundspeople, cleaners, therapy staff, specialist teachers, senior officers and public sector employees (AO1 – AO8).

This pilot includes the following inputs from the project team: an initial information session for all employees, a face-to-face training day for those identified as team leaders, monitoring activities at two points during the pilot, an offer of additional tailored training and support for team leaders during the pilot, a website of tools and resources to support all involved in the pilot, requested follow-up visits by the project lead and evaluation activities at the end point of the pilot.

Feedback data is being collected from all pilot participants during initial information sessions, and from all team leaders during their one day of training. Monitoring and evaluation activities at the mid-point of the pilot collected feedback from a representative sample of employees across all employee groups in fifty percent of pilot schools and work units. The feedback collected has been used to inform ‘interventions’ for the second half of the pilot (from January to June 2007) and to begin to inform strategies to facilitate phased statewide implementation of the Developing Performance Framework from July 2007.

This interim report details the findings from the collation and analysis of the feedback data collected during the initial information and training sessions and monitoring activities undertaken in November and December 2006.

Feedback from initial training and follow up monitoring shows that the majority of pilot participants understand the Developing Performance Framework, agree with its flexibility and intent and believe it is of importance to them. However, the degree of control they believe they have over how the Framework is integrated suggests a level of uncertainty from pilot participants as would be expected in the early phases of a change process.

After initial training the range of activities undertaken by team leaders and team members within pilot school and work units has varied and demonstrates the flexibility of the Framework. In some schools and work units team leaders utilised the tools from the website to revisit the school/work unit’s vision and aims and build team cohesion prior to beginning to have developing performance conversations. Others began the conversations required to clarify expectations and work focus and reach an agreement due to the strong strategic
operational links between current processes and systems and the Developing Performance Framework.

The time and resources required to ensure team meetings and/or individual conversations take place have been influenced by existing systems and processes. Established team meetings, meeting times that had been used previously for similar purposes, meetings that had previously been used for other purposes, or newly timetabled individual meetings have been used across pilot schools and work units to enable developing performance conversations to become a part of day to day work practice.

Team leaders and team members have described the importance of the team leader in maintaining the momentum required to embed the Framework. Where team leaders have continued to provide the impetus for change and led their team through a cohesive set of actions, deeper understanding of the Framework and a stronger sense of shared responsibility exists. The notion of ‘developing performance together’ is considered to be a key strength of the Framework as it empowers all employees to participate in continuous improvement and build personal job satisfaction.

In workplaces that have taken a more ad hoc approach, there are variations in progress to date across teams in integrating the Framework. In these instances Principals, Directors and team leaders are considering and making decisions in relation to the strategic positioning of the Developing Performance Framework and realigning timelines and actions for the second half of the pilot to ensure sustainable integration.

Recommendations from the findings are listed below. There are two types of recommendation: the first type are ‘interventions’ (these are actions for the second half of the pilot of the Developing Performance Framework informed by the feedback received during interim monitoring and will ensure continued progress toward integration of the Framework); and the second type relate to strategies to facilitate phased statewide implementation of the Developing Performance Framework from July 2007.

There are eleven recommendations that are ‘interventions’ for the second half of the pilot. There are four recommendations that relate to strategies to facilitate phased statewide implementation of the Developing Performance Framework.

**Recommendations**

**Recommendations for the pilot**

1) Revise the website’s listing of employee groups and accompanying support materials to ensure all employee groups are included.

2) Clarify, in consultation with district and regional staff, current developing performance processes for therapy staff and those with functional reporting relationships that cross over work units to ensure best practice is continued and information on the website reflects these practices.

3) Ensure that during the regular induction process, new staff at pilot sites (at the start of 2007) are provided with the initial training session to understand the Developing Performance Framework, their role in the pilot and the progress to date made by the pilot site in integrating the Framework.

4) Continue to monitor pilot participants’ perceptions of the strengths, pitfalls, opportunities and threats of Developing Performance systems and processes in their workplace over the course of the pilot. This will provide best-practice examples of actions and strategic approaches that have maximised the positive perceptions and outcomes and influenced and changed negative perceptions. These will be collated as case studies for use during staged implementation.

5) Update the website to include additional materials requested during the collection of feedback, that is, examples of completed Developing Performance Plans, information
sheets related to ‘writing performance objectives’; ‘Building trust and relationships’; ‘Team decision making’; ‘Negotiating decisions’; and ‘Active listening skills.

6) Deliver tailored professional development and support to team leaders during Term 1 and 2 of 2007. (Table 5 on page 24 provides a summary of the tailored PD and support options for team leaders, the delivery modes, and the number of team leaders who have identified the particular capability for further development.)

7) Evaluate the impact of customised professional development and support options in meeting team leaders’ needs.

8) Seek further feedback from employee groups as to the suitability of the materials on the website for their employee group.

9) In pilot schools and work units collect feedback from employees on temporary contracts to find out how the Developing Performance Framework is being used with this employee group.

10) Invite the Executive Directors (Schools) from Sunshine Coast North, Sunshine Coast South, Gold Coast and Logan-Albert Beaudesert to pilot the Developing Performance Framework when facilitating developing performance conversations with principals of pilot schools in their district.

11) Progress discussions with the QTU in Semester 1, 2007 in relation to the EB commitment for all school leaders “to participate in an agreed formalised annual process to confirm an agreement of expectations and review performance” and the relationship to the Developing Performance Framework.

**Recommendations for staged statewide implementation**

12) As part of introducing the Developing Performance Framework into a school or work site:
   a) it is essential to identify the integration of the Framework as a priority in a school or work unit annual operational plan and in the district/region plan in the year of integration.
   b) all employees participate in an initial training session to understand the Developing Performance Framework and its relevance to them.
   c) generic training materials are customised with local examples of the Framework’s alignment with existing workplace culture, systems and processes that will support the integration of the Framework. In addition, training needs to provide the opportunity to discuss the systems and processes that might be adapted (in varying degrees) to integrate the Framework.
   d) the Framework needs to be strategically positioned as the process through which employees develop a personalised understanding of the relationship between the department’s Strategic Plan, the school and/or work unit annual plan, the suite of professional standards for different employee cohorts, and their contribution to the achievement of the school/work unit and department’s objectives. It also needs to be the key driver for planning and agreeing to individual and team key work tasks, identifying steps towards career goals, and accessing support and professional development.
   e) it is necessary to dedicate time for designated team leaders to meet as a group in order to focus on the operational and strategic aspects of the Framework and to plan steps for how best to integrate the developing performance process with their team members. This does not necessarily have to take the format of a one-day training session.

13) The Assistant Director-General, Strategic HR give a presentation on the Developing Performance Framework and the links to the new recruitment and selection process at the REDs and EDSs business meeting in Term 1 2007. In addition, the project team develop an information sheet summarising the alignment of developing performance with the recruitment and selection process.

14) A professional development event be held for Executives in Term 3 2007 that focuses on the Executive Capabilities Framework and Executives’ responsibilities for leading the
integration of the Developing Performance Framework in their region, district or branch. This professional development event will be tailored to meet the support and professional development needs of Regional Executive Directors and Executive Directors. Regional Executive Directors and Executive Directors will be invited to indicate the content they would like covered during the PD event (linked to facilitating developing performance conversations) prior to attending this event.

15) The model for statewide phased implementation of the Developing Performance Framework needs to take account of the following:

- Sharing the skills, knowledge and experience acquired by team leaders who participated in the pilot
- REDs, EDSs, and ADGs have finalized their Developing Performance Agreements before facilitating the developing performance process for principals, senior district office staff and Central Office Directors
- REDs, EDSs, ADGs, Central Office Directors receive training in the values and intent of Developing Performance Framework and its use in their role
- All key district office personnel, inclusive of Regional Managers of HR, Facilities, Finance and IT, PAES and PD Coordinators also receive training in the values and intent of Developing Performance Framework and its use in their role so they can support REDs and EDSs
- The EB commitment for all school leaders ‘to participate in an agreed formalised annual process to confirm an agreement of expectations and review performance’ is supported by EDSs through conversations focused on the Principal’s developing performance and finalizing a Developing Performance Agreement with each principal in their district by the start of the 2009 school year (subject to consultation with the QTU on the relationship between the ‘formalised process’ and the Developing Performance Framework).
- REDs, EDSs and key district office personnel work with school leaders to plan for integration of the Developing Performance Framework for all employees as a key priority in regional and schools’ strategic planning.