

Report of External Evaluation and Review

Wesfarmers Industrial & Safety NZ
Limited trading as NZ Safety Worksafe
Training

Confident in educational performance

Confident in capability in self-assessment

Date of report: 15 February 2012

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MoE Number: 7254
NZQA Reference: C05636
Date of EER visit: 28 and 29 September 2011

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this external evaluation and review report is to provide a public statement about the Tertiary Education Organisation's (TEO) educational performance and capability in self-assessment. It forms part of the accountability process required by Government to inform investors, the public, students, prospective students, communities, employers, and other interested parties. It is also intended to be used by the TEO itself for quality improvement purposes.

Introduction

1. TEO in context

Location:	87 Kerrs Road, Wiri, Manukau
Type:	Private training establishment
First registered:	1998
Number of students:	Domestic: 2,519 on short courses International: nil
Number of staff:	Two full-time trainers, three administrative staff, six contract trainers
Scope of active accreditation:	Health, occupational health and safety; unit standards covering height, safety in confined places, spill response training, health and safety auditing, defensive driving skills, and chainsaw safety.
Distinctive characteristics:	NZ Safety Worksafe Training (NZS) has been offering worksafe training since the introduction of the 1992 Health and Safety in Employment Act (HSE Act). It is a limited liability company, with Wesfarmers (head office, Sydney, Australia) as the parent body. Wesfarmers, established in 1914, was originally a Western Australian farmers' cooperative. It is now one of Australia's largest listed companies and employers, with 2,000 employees and an annual turnover of \$AUD50 billion. Its diverse business operations cover: supermarkets, department stores, home improvement and office supplies, coal mining, insurance, chemicals, energy and fertilisers, and industrial and safety products. The primary aim of

Wesfarmers is to provide a satisfactory return to its shareholders.

Recent significant changes:	There have been two recent significant appointments to NZS, that of a national manager in 2009 and a national training manager in 2010. Staff spoken to said both these appointments had led to a significant positive increase in work for NZS.
Previous quality assurance history:	At the last NZQA quality assurance visit, in 2007, NZS met all the quality assurance requirements of the standard in place at the time.
Other:	All training is conducted at customers' workplaces.

2. Scope of external evaluation and review

The focus areas selected were the mandatory focus area of governance, management, and strategy, and the unit standards based programmes where the majority of the training occurs: Safe Work at Heights (unit standard 17600 *Explain safe work practices for working at heights*) and Confined Space Entry (unit standard 18426 *Demonstrate knowledge of hazards associated with confined spaces*).

3. Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published policies and procedures. The methodology used is described fully in the web document Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eer/introduction/>

The EER team comprised two evaluators and the visit was held over two days. The first day was on site and day two involved contacting external stakeholders by phone. The evaluation team met with the national manager, national training manager, the office manager, a key administrative staff member, and a contract trainer on site. The evaluation team spoke by phone to the academic trainer, the chemical management trainer, several contract trainers, and a sample of established and new customers who have used NZS's training services.

The team also reviewed a range of written documentation, including the business plan, the marketing plan, completed feedback forms from trainees, the professional development planner for trainers, and the online database, Vet Track.

Wesfarmers Industrial & Safety NZ Limited trading as NZ Safety Worksafe Training has had an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received have been fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Summary of Results

Statement of confidence on educational performance

NZQA is **Confident** in the educational performance of **Wesfarmers Industrial & Safety NZ Limited trading as NZ Safety Worksafe Training**.

- Training is highly effective as it is focussed on the needs of industry for compliance with the relevant health and safety legislation and up-to-date validation of trainee skills. Trainees are well supported and guided before, during, and after the training.
- Trainees achieve excellent results while gaining the skill-sets required to perform safely in their workplaces. NZS has a 98 per cent pass rate across all the programmes it offers.
- In 2010 NZS successfully trained 2,000 employees in height and confined spaces safety practices (unit standards 17600 and 18426). Class numbers are carefully controlled to maximise the opportunities for trainees to engage effectively with the trainer; the average class is six to eight trainees.
- All NZS trainers initially received their training in the New Zealand Fire Service and the armed forces, or are professionally trained climbers. They are also highly qualified subject specialists with adult teaching experience and qualifications.
- Evaluation forms completed by trainees showed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the training materials, the competence levels of the trainers, and the relevance of the skills gained to trainees' jobs.

Statement of confidence on capability in self assessment

NZQA is **Confident** in the capability in self-assessment of **Wesfarmers Industrial & Safety NZ Limited trading as NZ Safety Worksafe Training**.

- NZS adds value to its training outcomes by targeting the training it offers to each customer. Customers contacted by the evaluation team noted that this customisation of training was an important point of difference over other trainers and a major reason for contracting NZS.
- NZS follows up with customers post-training to receive formal written feedback on the relevance of the training content to the workplace skills required, the usefulness of the materials and workbooks, and the quality of the overall training experience. In response to customer feedback, all pre- and post-training calls to customers are now done by a trainer. The new model has provided rich feedback and specific information which has been useful for making changes and has also led to repeat business.

- In response to feedback received from trainees, NZS has standardised lesson plans, the formats of workbooks, and the content of course materials to improve their usability for trainees. These improvements have made it easier for trainees to navigate through the workbooks.
- NZS keeps up to date with any legislative changes by engaging with the appropriate government bodies and the relevant industry training organisations. It also keeps up with changes in technology and the implications these may have for training and the maintenance of safe workplaces.
- NZS has traditionally used a spreadsheet system to track trainee achievement but has recently adopted a database from Wesfarmers' Australian head office which will enable it to more easily identify and track trends in trainee achievement over time and across courses. In time, the new database will link to the NZS website which is currently being redeveloped.
- The evaluation team sighted the folders that NZS keeps for communication with the industry training organisations it deals with. They showed evidence of moderation cycles, moderation results, and meetings held.
- Trainers interviewed by the evaluation team described the NZS culture as strong, open, and honest. Another recurring comment was that NZS listens to suggestions and ideas for improvement and has a system for prioritising ideas.
- Effective training is supported by governance and management by encouraging a work culture where ideas for improving the business are welcomed and by having a strategic approach which is responsive to changing circumstances in the diverse industries NZS serves.

Findings¹

1.1 How well do trainees achieve?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Trainees achieve excellent results while gaining the skill-sets required to perform safely in their workplaces. NZS has a 98 per cent pass rate across all the programmes it offers. The 2 per cent who do not pass have English language difficulties or literacy issues. In 2010, NZS successfully trained 2,000 employees in height and confined spaces (unit standards 17600 and 18426). Class numbers are carefully controlled, with a minimum of five trainees, a maximum of ten, and an average of six to eight trainees.

The evaluation team sighted a range of completed trainee evaluation forms which showed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the training materials, the competence levels of the trainers, and the relevance of the skills gained to trainees' jobs. In response to feedback received from trainees, NZS has standardised lesson plans, formats of workbooks, and the content of the course materials to improve their usability for trainees. These improvements have made it easier for trainees to navigate through the workbooks. Trainees reported that they kept the workbooks and used them as a reference tool once they returned to their workplace.

NZS has traditionally used a spreadsheet system to track trainee achievement but has recently adopted a database from Wesfarmers' Australia head office which will enable it to more easily identify and track trends in trainee achievement over time and across courses. Wesfarmers Australia is currently in the process of back-loading previous NZS training courses onto this database, to enable this analysis to occur.

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including learners?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The community benefits from an appropriately trained workforce, many of whom are working in high-risk occupations, such as in confined spaces (e.g. mines) or at heights (e.g. stevedoring at ports). Some of the training NZS offers requires revalidation and retraining after a few years. Careful follow-up with customers has

¹ The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

led to refresher courses being organised, leading to a 33 per cent increase in repeat business in 2011. The excellent trainee records NZS maintains means customers can be contacted when refresher training is due for their employees.

NZS adds value to its training outcomes by targeting the training it offers to each customer. Trainees are sent by their employers. The new training or retraining allows them to continue in their current work role, achieve revalidation in this role, or gain access to other roles within their workplaces. The NZS trainer visits all customers' workplaces prior to the training and has an ongoing dialogue with each employer before, during, and after the training is completed. The pre-meeting allows NZS to tailor the generic unit standards to meet specific customer needs. NZS always conducts the training at the customer's worksite which means it is relevant to, and focussed on, the specific industry and equipment trainees work with.

Customers contacted by the evaluation team noted that this customisation of training was an important point of difference over other trainers and was one of the reasons they had decided to use, or continued to use, NZS for their training. They also noted that their trainees had given them informal feedback that the training had a clear focus and was of high quality. NZS follows up with customers post-training to gain formal written feedback on the relevance of the training content to the workplace skills required, the usefulness of the materials and workbooks, and the quality of the overall training experience.

NZS has 24 regional offices nationwide, each with its own budget and account branch managers. The decision to regionalise was taken to save costs and provide customers with access to staff who had local knowledge and greater availability. Feedback to the evaluation team from employers indicated that existing and new customers appreciated this responsive local service. It is particularly useful for larger companies as it allows them to use one training organisation to train all employees around the country. This saves the customer time and money, standardises the training content and, combined with the NZS approach of customising all training, allows for targeting the training nationally and, if required, regionally.

While NZS has an excellent database, the system has not been "live" long enough to be able to track trainees in their workplaces in order to measure the possible longer-term outcomes of their training, for example fewer work accidents. However, NZS is clear about the functionality of the database and the way it can be used in the future to analyse trends and longer-term outcomes.

1.3 How well do programmes and activities match the needs of trainees and other stakeholders?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

NZS exists to meet customers' needs for health and safety training. Much of this work is legislation driven, for example unit standard 497 *Demonstrate knowledge of workplace health and safety requirements*. NZS keeps up to date with any legislative changes by engaging with the appropriate government bodies, such as NZQA, and the relevant industry training organisations. NZS also keeps up with changing technology and the implications this has for training and safe workplaces, for example wind farm technology which has a particular need for training in working at heights.

The team sighted an extensive range of trainee evaluations across the two focus areas. The evaluations were very positive about the course content, delivery, and support provided, both leading up to the training and after the training is completed. The feedback loop includes the evaluations completed by the trainees (about the course content and quality of the trainer), the evaluation by the trainer of the class (the trainer's view of the trainees), and the post-training feedback from the customer. The post-training feedback is correlated with the trainee feedback and the trainer's report to reach a balanced view of the overall training experience for all stakeholders. Any discrepancies are followed up and appropriate action taken, for example additional professional development for a trainer.

In response to customer feedback, all pre- and post-training calls to customers are now done by the trainer. They were previously done by the office staff, but the feedback received was often too general and as a result not useful for informing possible areas for improvement. The new model has provided richer feedback and specific information which has been useful for making changes and has also led to repeat business.

NZS is working towards being a "one stop shop" where it can also provide safety equipment and safety gear to customers. Trainers sometimes accompany regional sector representatives to meet existing and potential customers. Trainers do not actively sell the equipment but they are often a logical contact point for customers as they have ongoing contact with them. NZS provides a consultation service; customers are welcome to ring NZS at any time to discuss issues, at no cost to them.

The database will allow customers to access the NZS training schedule and enrol online. This process will generate an enrolment form to be sent electronically to the customer. In time, the new database will link to the NZS website which is currently being redeveloped. NZS works proactively to match the needs of its customers and trainees. It does this by reviewing and acting on feedback from its current stakeholders and by ongoing analysis of the changing training needs in the industries it serves.

1.4 How effective is the training?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Excellent**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Training is highly effective as it is focussed on the needs of industry for compliance with the relevant health and safety legislation and for up-to-date validation of trainee skills. NZS has a specialist experienced trainer in each field, for example confined spaces. NZS maintains consistency of delivery by offering the same unit standard packages across industry sectors. Most of the courses offered use open book and multi-choice questions to assess competency which allows trainees to focus on understanding the training materials and where to find the required information, rather than rote learning per se.

All the training equipment is tested for safety by the trainer prior to course delivery. All NZS trainers initially received their training in the New Zealand Fire Service and the armed services, or are professionally trained climbers. They are highly qualified subject specialists with adult teaching experience and qualifications. All trainers, whether full or part-time, are employed under the same employment criteria. The regional structure means trainers are required to travel less often than would be the case otherwise.

The evaluation team sighted the folders NZS keeps for communication with the industry training organisations they deal with, which include the Extractive Industries Training Organisation, the New Zealand Industry Training Organisation, Agriculture Industry Training Organisation, and Competenz (the New Zealand Engineering, Food and Manufacturing Industry Training Organisation). The folders showed evidence of moderation cycles, moderation results, and meetings held.

Evaluations by the trainees of the training received showed overwhelmingly that they experienced the training process as engaging and interactive. The workbooks sighted by the evaluation team were written in plain English, well set out, and highly readable. Trainers interviewed discussed examples of effective teaching practice, including the training techniques they used to balance the theoretical and practical aspects of the training. Trainers sign a code of conduct which covers equipment, uniform, and the approach NZS wants them to take to training. Interactive classes are encouraged as most trainees are very “hands-on” and not used to sitting and listening for long periods.

The national training manager looks for consistency across trainers and observes them regularly, usually sitting in on a training session for half a day. However, systematic trainer observations have not occurred in 2011 because of other pressures, such as the demands of the repeat business. The observations will resume when a senior trainer returns from overseas soon. He will be observing all trainers systematically and giving them feedback. Trainers complete a maximum of 15 days training per month, allowing time for professional development. This includes a Pre Hospital Emergency Care (PHEC) course with St John (three days),

unit standard materials development, renewal of unit standard 497, and working towards developing a broader focus for trainers, for example gas detection training and rope access courses at a polytechnic.

All the trainers spoken to agreed that they were well supported with professional development and that there was an effective process for identifying professional development needs. The needs of individuals and the wider organisation are considered so that NZS can balance individual requests with “all-of-organisation” needs, giving priority to professional development opportunities that build the overall capability of the organisation.

1.5 How well are learners guided and supported?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Trainees are well supported and guided before, during, and after the training. The enrolment form has a place where trainees can indicate particular needs, for example food requirements, cultural needs, and disabilities. Examples of unforeseen needs arising on the day of the training that were dealt with effectively and appropriately were discussed with the evaluation team. All trainers give their email and cell phone contacts to trainees and encourage them to get in touch if they have any queries that arise post-training.

A small percentage of trainees fail as a result of English language difficulties or literacy issues. Employers are given clear reasons why their employee has not met the required standard. NZS estimates that the overall number of trainees with these issues, in any one year, is about 10 per cent of enrolees. These people are referred back to their employers or on to other agencies if they want assistance.

There is a formal complaints process, with an average of three to four complaints received each year. These are usually about the venue and facilities. The national training manager deals with these complaints directly with the customers. Academic issues, such as a query from a trainee about not passing, are also dealt with by the national training manager. In one such case, the trainer went back to the workplace and worked one-to-one with the trainee, at no additional cost to the employer.

Customers spoken to by the evaluation team commented that, compared to other, similar training providers NZS class numbers were low and that this was an important factor when choosing a training provider as it contributed to the quality of the learning experience for trainees. NZS’s emphasis on small class numbers helps to provide a quality training experience, as trainers have more time to engage effectively with individual trainees and can provide more opportunities for trainees to practise new skills, increasing the likelihood of a successful outcome.

1.6 How effective are governance and management in supporting training?

The rating for performance in relation to this key evaluation question is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this key evaluation question is **Good**.

Governance and management at NZS are highly effective. NZS is a limited liability company with Wesfarmers (head office, Sydney, Australia) as the parent body. As a limited liability company, NZS shares some functions, such as finance, human resources, and information technology services, with Wesfarmers. An example of this is the database which was sourced from Wesfarmers and adapted to meet NZS requirements.

However, NZS has its own governance and management structures which operate independently from Wesfarmers Australia. NZS is the largest supplier of safety equipment in New Zealand. It has 700 employees in New Zealand and had a turnover of \$NZ76 million in 2010.

This market exposure and client base provides opportunities for NZS to continue to grow its training operations. The company's strategic plan includes areas of potential growth, such as increased involvement in the utility sector (hydro and electricity). The national training manager was employed to focus on growing the training programmes. As part of this strategy, NZS has employed an external contractor with extensive management experience in the PTE sector.

Trainers, although working in different parts of the country, have regular Monday morning teleconferences. They meet face to face every six months and recently completed a three-day conference in Taupo where they looked at safety product education. There is an online professional development planner for staff which is colour coded for different activities and accessible to all staff. Trainers interviewed by the evaluation team described the NZS culture as strong, open, and honest. Another recurring comment was that NZS listens to suggestions and ideas for improvement and has a system for prioritising ideas.

Effective training is supported by governance and management with a range of practices, including:

- Small class sizes to maximise learner engagement and success
- Training at provider workplaces to maximise the relevance of the training
- Targeting the training to each customer
- Deploying a structure of regional branches to serve local communities
- Employing well qualified specialist trainers
- Encouraging a work culture where ideas for improving the business are welcomed
- Providing generous professional opportunities

- Offering free, ongoing consultation to customers
- Having a quality management system and marketing plan that are living documents able to respond to changing circumstances in the diverse industries NZS serves.

Focus Areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 Focus area: Governance, management, and strategy

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

2.2 Focus area: Safe Work at Heights (unit standard 17600)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

2.3 Focus area: Confined Space Entry (unit standard 18426)

The rating in this focus area for educational performance is **Good**.

The rating for capability in self-assessment for this focus area is **Good**.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review, other than those expressed or implied within the report.

Appendix

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review are requirements of course approval and accreditation (under sections 258 and 259 of the Education Act 1989) for all TEOs that are entitled to apply. The requirements are set through the course approval and accreditation criteria and policies established by NZQA under section 253(1)(d) and (e) of the Act.

In addition, for registered private training establishments, the criteria and policies for their registration require self-assessment and external evaluation and review at an organisational level in addition to the individual courses they own or provide. These criteria and policies are set by NZQA under section 253(1)(ca) of the Act.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the policies and criteria after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of courses and/or registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the policies and criteria approved by the NZQA Board.

The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz).

*Information relevant to the external evaluation and review process, including the publication *Policy and Guidelines for the Conduct of External Evaluation and Review*, is available at: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/registration-and-accreditation/external-evaluation-and-review/policy-and-guidelines-eeer/introduction/>*

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