

# **WorldSkills New Zealand Annual General Meeting, 10 November 2009 Events Co-ordinator's Report**

## **International Competition**

The Team to compete at the international competition in Calgary, Canada was announced in November 2008. This year we took 17 competitors and two team leaders.

### **Team Camps:**

We had two team camps. The first was in May at Burnham Military Camp in Christchurch. Our thanks to the NZ Defence Force for hosting the camp and making their facilities and conference room available to us. The team participated in some fairly strenuous team building activities and were given talks on what they could expect in Calgary and how best to prepare for the competition. Competitors and Experts also had time together for preparation. While the competitors were doing their team building exercise, the Experts went to CPIT to have a look at the facilities which will be used for the 2010 National Finals. This will enable them to plan their projects, knowing what space and equipment is available.

The second team camp was held in Auckland at the ETCO Training facility in Ramarama. Our thanks to ETCO for allowing us to use this fantastic venue free of charge. Uniforms were issued at this camp, past competitors came to talk about their experiences, details of what was to happen at Calgary were talked about and competitors and experts again had time together to work on the final details of training. The camp finished with a guest speaker - Marcus Akuhata-Brown who motivated the team to make the most of every opportunity that comes their way. Marcus' expenses were covered by sponsorship from Te Puni Kokiri.

### **Farewell Function hosted by the Governor-General:**

His Excellency agreed to host a farewell function for the Team and our major sponsors at Government House in Auckland. This was held on the Saturday evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> team camp. The team wore their Dress uniform. There was a short formal part of the evening when His Excellency spoke, Bruce Howat replied and Marcel Woods, automotive technology competitor spoke on behalf of the team. Formal photos were taken of the team with His Excellency and Lady Susan. The evening was a great success and sponsors were pleased to get the opportunity to meet the team members.

### **Australian Simulated International Competition**

Ten competitors and their experts, along with the two team leaders went to Newcastle, Australia in May to participate in the Simulated International Competition. This was a very valuable experience for the competitors and those who were able to go were more mentally prepared for the competition in Calgary. An added bonus of the Simulated competition was that the Kiwi's got to know the Aussies so they knew there would be a familiar face in Calgary.

### **Tool Boxes:**

The tool boxes were sent by sea to Calgary, using the firm Time Frame Logistics, which is a subsidiary of the official firm appointed by WorldSkills Calgary. All the tool boxes arrived safely and there were no issues with getting them through customs in Calgary. They tool boxes are due to arrive back in New Zealand on 9 November and should be ready to be picked up by the 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Uniforms:**

The Motor Trade Association use Apparelmaster for all their uniform supplies, and encourage their companies to do the same so they approached Apparelmaster for sponsorship of the uniforms. Apparelmaster agreed to sponsor the Automotive category uniforms and gave us a good price for supplying the rest of the team. Because Apparelmaster only came on board fairly late in the year the timeframe for sorting the uniforms was very tight and uniforms were still being embroidered with sponsors logos the week before the team was due to leave. The uniforms were good and the only major problem was that the work shirt had a reflective strip on the front which made photography with a flash impossible.

### **Flights:**

Flights to and from Calgary were booked through Air New Zealand Group Bookings and this worked very well as we were able to make changes right up to the last minute. We opted to travel via Los Angeles because this was the cheaper option but it did mean the team all had to apply for visa waivers.

### **Fundraising:**

Some team members were fully funded by National Sponsors but most had to find some of their own funding and some of them had to raise the complete amount needed. Fundraising was not as easy this year with the economic situation but all the team did very well with fundraising. Regional Committees, competitors and experts worked hard to raise funds through applying to various trusts, from service clubs, and various activities such as auctions and selling "Scratchy Boards". A big thank you to all those involved in the fundraising activities - and a very big thank you to every organisation who sponsored the team members.

### **Media and Promotion**

The focus of the WorldSkills NZ newsletters during 2009 was the companies that the Tool Blacks work for. Four Newsletters with this focus were produced. These were sent out in March, April, June and August.

The MTA very generously offered the help of their media person to help with the media releases on the Tool Black team. This help was invaluable and very much appreciated - A big thank you to Andy Cuming from the MTA for all the hard work he put in for us. There were a number of articles in newspapers, the internet and on the radio as a direct result of the press releases being sent out.

Media releases were sent out before and after the Farewell Function with the Governor-General, before, during and after the competitions in Calgary.

In addition, during the year the regional committees actively promoted their team members to their local media and this proved to be very successful.

TV1 prepared a news item on the team, ready to be aired the week before the team left, but it ended up not being shown because other events took priority.

We hoped that TV3 would come to the Team Camp and/or the Governor-General's farewell but this did not happen.

WorldSkills NZ did get some TV coverage while the team was away. It was unfortunate that this only happened because of the death of Kirsty Lister's father. We thought that because of this we may get some media at the airport when the team arrived home but no media turned up for this.

### **Website**

The Website was totally redesigned early in 2009. The new format has proved to be very flexible and we now have a secure access section on the website where information specific to Regional Chairs, Experts and Competitors can be posted.

During the year the website has been updated on a regular basis. We are now able to play video clips on the website, and during the Calgary competitions a direct link to the WorldSkills TV site was set up on the front page. WorldSkills International sent through to our website the video clips related to our New Zealand team members.

The Website received a lot of traffic during the International competitions – peaking at over 700 page loads per day.

## **Preparation for the 2010 Regional and National Competitions**

### **Regional Competitions**

- The Guidelines for running Regional Competitions are in the final stages of being updated. They will be distributed to Regional Chairs in the next few weeks. The guidelines include role descriptions for Regional Chair, Regional Competition Co-ordinator, Judge, Regional Team Leader and templates for letters to competitors, employers, judges and sponsors.
- Dates of the Regional competitions have been posted on the website along with regional contact details and registration information and forms.
- Regional committees have been informed which skill categories are being run as regional competitions and which are being organised in different ways.
- Most regional competition projects are completed and ready to use. There are a few which need to be finalised but these are being worked on and will be completed well before the first competition.
- Regions have been encouraged to hold as many skill category competitions as possible – especially in the three Automotive categories, the three Engineering categories, Carpentry, Plumbing, Floristry, and PC & Network Support.

### **National Finals - 22-26 September 2010**

- Guidelines for organising the National Finals were written after the 2008 event. A Check list of tasks has been put together along with dates when the tasks need to be completed. It is noted that the guidelines and task list are still a ‘work in progress’ and will be added to if necessary during 2010.
- A Co-ordinator at CPIT has been appointed. This is Phil Agnew. Phil’s main responsibility is to ensure that all the skill categories have suitable space at CPIT, the work stations are set up ready for the competition and the necessary equipment and materials are available for the competitions.
- An initial planning meeting was held at CPIT in September 2009. Further meetings will be held as necessary – with the majority of meetings being conference calls rather than face-to-face meetings.
- CPIT will use the time of the National Finals as their main Open Day and for a Trade Expo and will promote the National Finals at the same time as these events.
- Accommodation for Regional Teams has been booked at the Christchurch City YHA. WorldSkills will have total use of this facility for the duration of the competitions. Thanks to Bryn Holland for investigating accommodation options and doing the groundwork on this.