



## APTC training facility launched in PNG



*The Governor General and Grand Chief, Sir Paulias Matane (second from left) arriving for the launch of the facility. Escorting His Excellency are (left) Ian Wells, Director ACEM, Secretary for Education Doctor Pagelio, Australian High Commissioner Mr Chris Moraitis, Mr Damien Rapese, Deputy Secretary Department of Education & APTC Advisory Group member and Antoine Barnaart, GM APTC Coordination Office*

"ON behalf of the Government and the people of Papua New Guinea, I convey our sincere appreciation to the Government and the people of Australia for providing technical and vocational skills development opportunities to Pacific Island students (including Papua New Guinean students) through this college."

With these words Papua New Guinea's Governor General and Grand Chief, Sir Paulias Matane, officially opened the AUS\$5 million APTC training facility in Port Moresby.

### Importance of event

The importance of the event was underscored with the attendance of the Australian High Commissioner to PNG, Mr Chris Moraitis, the General Manager of APTC, Mr Antoine Barnaart, and the Director Schools of ACEM (Automotive, Construction & Electrical and Manufacturing), Mr Ian Wells.

The new APTC Port Moresby Technical College (POMTECH) is indicative of the importance that APTC places on its campuses in Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, as well as Papua New Guinea as training centres.

### Outstanding features

Among the POMTECH features are accommodation for seventy students and eight staff, a dining hall and kitchen to serve 60 people, six classrooms, all with Internet, offering the latest in digital technology, and a purpose-built 1,200 square metre workshop adaptable to requirements in Automotive, Construction, Electrical, Fitting and Machining, and Metal Fabrication trade training.

### More than just buildings

Endorsing the comments made earlier by the Governor General, Mr Moraitis said in his speech that "This to me is what today (the opening) is about; not sheets of iron that make up the buildings, but the opportunity this level of training will in turn give back to the country.

"The development of a strong base of trade skills is essential for the ongoing development of any nation, and particularly so for PNG. With so many natural resources, a skilled workforce will use these resources to build a future national prosperity and increase living standards."

### Second graduation ceremony

Mr Antoine Barnaart told the guests "in witnessing the opening of the facility we also have the opportunity to witness our second graduation ceremony in Papua New Guinea, and it is actually the eleventh for the Australia-Pacific Technical College."

Seven students from ACEM and twenty-seven students from the STH (School of Tourism & Hospitality) received their certificates at the graduation ceremony held as part of the launch of the new facilities.

Mr Barnaart said that graduation ceremonies had also been held in Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Nauru and Kiribati.

### Acknowledged partners

As part of his remarks to the gathering, Mr Ian Wells said "the state-of-the-art facility utilises some of the latest technology and innovation in vocational educational training."

He acknowledged their training partners in PNG, the Department of Education (particularly Port Moresby Technical College), Hastings Deering, Ok Tedi Mining Ltd., and Ela Motors "for their cooperation."

## Advisory Group guides APTC into 2009

SOME of the success of APTC must be attributed to the contribution made by the APTC Advisory Group, a dedicated team of men and women recruited from the education sector, regional organisations, and governments in the region.

Following the initial meeting in May 2008, the Advisory Group has met three times to review the progress of APTC, advising the College on policy and strategic development.

In its latest meeting in March of this year in Nadi, with 25 in attendance, Chairperson, Judith Robinson, Minister Counsellor, AusAID, set the tone of the meeting by telling those present, "The Australian Government and AusAID have a keen interest in the form and direction TVET will take in the future."

Also included were representatives from the Pacific Island countries of Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Tonga.

Mr Antoine Barnaart, GM APTC Coordination Office, presented an update on college progress.

Co-presenters, Mr Ian Wells, Project Director of the School of Automotive, Construction, & Electrical, and Manufacturing (ACEM) and Mr Anthony Bailey, Head of School, School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) addressed the meeting on their respective Schools' developments. Mr Bailey also spoke on behalf of the School of Health and Community Services.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) Team, led by Team Leader, Ms Kaye Schofield, also attended the meeting, and presented the Advisory Group with discussion papers for feedback, prior to the presentation of the MTR Team's report later in the year.

## APTC GM supports Co-operative Management model

THE Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) demonstrates how collaboration can lead to the successful delivery of internationally recognised education and qualifications in the South Pacific.

APTC is an Australian Government funded initiative, administered by AusAID, to further the social and economic development of South Pacific Forum island countries through technical and vocational training.

As part of a Cooperative Management Model, the collaboration between the Box Hill Institute, Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE and APTC Coordination Office ensures that management, administration, trainers, student recruitment and support systems, and course content and delivery, are all of the highest standards.

Each plays a specific and vital role towards creating the synergistic whole that is APTC.

Box Hill Institute of TAFE is responsible for the School of Tourism & Hospitality, and the School of Health and Community Services, while Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE manages the



APTC GM Antoine Barnaart

School of Automotive, Construction & Electrical, and Manufacturing.

The APTC Coordination Office in Nadi is the administrative arm of the collaboration, with the General Manager, Mr Antoine Barnaart holding overall administrative responsibility.

Mr Barnaart has a particular affinity with the South Pacific, as his wife, Kerry Lee-anne, was born on the island of Nauru.

Mr Barnaart is no stranger to positions of responsibility and the realm of education delivery. Beginning his professional life as a research technician, Mr Barnaart has advanced from a grass-roots level, during 17 years as lecturer, Senior

Lecturer, Associate Dean, before holding Pro Vice-Chancellor positions at Charles Darwin University/Northern Territory University.

Mr Barnaart also brings to his position as APTC General Manager his considerable expertise in international project management, and international and vocational education and training. Prior to his current appointment, Mr Barnaart spent six months in Bahrain as Australian Project Manager, Secondary Vocational Education Reform Project, followed by three and a half years in China as The Australian Team Leader of the AusAID funded Australia China (Chongqing) VET project. Apart from China and Bahrain, Mr Barnaart has also been involved in recruitment and project management for another 16 countries.

Mr Barnaart attributes the success that APTC is experiencing towards meeting the goal of graduating 3,000 South Pacific students to the highly motivated students, high quality teachers and to the smooth running of the Cooperative Management Model, in which all participants operate to the highest professional standards.

## APTC applauds NUS celebrations

THE National University of Samoa celebrated its 25th Anniversary strongly supported by APTC Samoa staff and students.

The day's celebrations included a Silver Jubilee Parade through the nation's capital Apia where the NUS graduates, faculty and students, dressed in colourful island-printed uniforms received a rousing reception from those along the route.

The APTC students in uniform stationed themselves in front of the Australian High Commission to witness the Silver Jubilee Parade along Beach Road and warmly applauded the university members as they marched by.

At the conclusion of the march there was a special function held at Government Building to mark this historic occasion, attended by the Head of State, the Honourable Prime Minister, and other dignitaries.

NUS alumni and current students returned to the university in the afternoon for a barbeque lunch and speeches, and the APTC students took advantage of the opportunity to socialise with their NUS peers.

APTC, as a training partner with NUS, was "honoured" to join in the celebrations.

## Big Skills Conference attracts Pacific team

THE APTC GM, Antoine Barnaart, joined Dr Helen Tavola, Social Policy Adviser, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Mr Josua Mataika Chair of Pacific Association of TVET Providers and Mr John Fahy, AusAID TVET Adviser, to present a full session on Skills Development in the Pacific. There were additional APTC connections, with Mary Hicks, APTC Advisory Group Member chairing the session and a day earlier, Anthony Bailey over viewing Box Hill Institute's international programmes.

The Big Skills Conference, hosted by the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) was considered a huge success, with over 1200 people attending from a number of countries around the world.

The Hon Julia Gillard, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and Minister for Social Inclusion, and The Hon Brendan O'Connor, Minister for Employment Participation, gave Ministerial keynote presentations.

## Special meaning for Samoan graduation



STH Head of School, Anthony Bailey (centre back) with graduates and trainers

GRADUATION ceremonies took on a special meaning when the APTC School of Tourism & Hospitality celebrated its second graduation in the Samoan fale, the world's largest, at the National University of Samoa campus on March 16th.

The pageantry of the event acknowledged the partnership between APTC and the campus country, Samoa. The official party received plaited ulas, and

the academic procession entered to the sound of conch shells and the beating of the lali (drum).

In decorating the fale, the graduating students not only recognised their home country and culture with fine mats, tapa cloth and the national flower, the teuila, but also paid homage to the AusAID funded initiative of APTC by using the Australian national colours of green and gold.

# STH and Tanoa Rakiraki, a unique partnership

THE APTC School of Tourism & Hospitality (STH) enjoys a unique partnership with the Tanoa Rakiraki Hotel.

The hotel, located in the quaint farming town of Rakiraki on Fiji's main island of Viti Levu, was built in 1945 and has become a landmark in the country.

It is not only a training facility for the 36 students from six South Pacific countries; Tuvalu, Kiribati, Tonga, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Fiji, but has also become home for their two trainers.

The trainers, Tom Caterall and Ashley Nugent, and their 17 Certificate III Commercial Cookery and 19 Certificate III Hospitality Operations students are all accommodated at the hotel.

Practical lessons take place in the



*Trainer Ashley Nugent and STH students in the Tanoa Rakiraki gardens*

refurbished kitchen and dining room, and the students also take it in turns to assist the hotel staff in cooking and serving meals to guests, fellow students and trainers.

"We are being taught skills by the best trainers ever," said Sainaz

Nisha of Fiji. "They are world-class, and they are making sure that all of us are well grounded in the basics. Our trainers also look after the whole person."

Angnga Teenga of Kiribati agrees with her classmate. "Not only do we

get help with our studies, but the trainers are always available to help us with any personal problems or concerns."

"We also have social, quiz and trivial pursuits nights, and movie evenings on a regular basis, as well as our study programme," continued Angnga. "We are enjoying living at the hotel. We have our studies, entertainment, and we are mixing with people with different cultures and religions. This is like being part of a family."

Mr Shiu Prasad, Manager of the Tanoa Rakiraki, is enthusiastic about the partnership with APTC. "Not only do my staff have the help of the APTC students, but they are also learning new skills and techniques through working closely with the APTC Trainers."

## Vava'u joins Tongatapu in celebrations



*Chief Magistrate Paula Tatafu & Karl Evans Country Manager Samoa*

Vava'u celebrated the graduation of three of its own citizens from the School of Tourism & Hospitality in Samoa, following close on the graduation ceremony on Tongatapu.

The STH Certificate III graduates, Evalina Fa'aoa Lavalavu (Tourism), Amanaki Lelei Funaki (Tourism) and Katalina Hungalu (Hospitality) returned to their home island to share the ceremony with their family, friends, and employers.

Demonstrating the support that APTC Alumni are providing each other was APTC graduate Viliami Pale of Nukualofa, who came to congratulate his new Alumni colleagues.

## First STH Vanuatu graduates poised to contribute

TWENTY-TWO Ni-Vanuatu students celebrated with family and friends as they received their Certificates from the School of Hospitality & Tourism (STH) during graduation ceremonies held at the Le Meridan Hotel in Port Vila.

Eight of the students received their Certificate III in Hospitality (Operations), one in Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery), and a total of 13 in Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

In his remarks, Acting Minister of Education James Bule thanked the Australian Government for providing the scholarships and training through APTC and highlighted the partnership between the Vanuatu Institute of Technology and APTC that delivered their first programme in 2007.

The Australian High Commissioner to Vanuatu, Pablo Kang also congratulated the students and said that he hoped "that you are making the best use of the privilege that APTC is providing to you."

But perhaps the spirit of the ceremony was best summed up by one of the student graduates who said that the mission statement for APTC "Creating

Skills for Life" is so aptly put because it reflects the very goal this institution is continuously trying to achieve."



*Australian High Commissioner Mr Pablo Kang presenting Sindy Metsan with her Certificate*

## In-country training in Kiribati



*Adrian Smith with carpentry students*

APTC is undertaking workplace assessment in Kiribati through its School of Automotive, Construction & Electrical and Manufacturing (ACEM) course.

ACEM, in partnership with its training partner, Kiribati Housing, is improving the skills of three students in carpentry.

ACEM trainer, Adrian Smith said that the students show "amazing enthusiasm, and are covering a lot of territory in a very practical way."

"The staff at Kiribati Housing has been very helpful. In addition to training the students we have the opportunity of providing tips to their other tradesmen. It is an excellent experience," said Mr Smith.

## APTC endorsed by top Australian politicians



Minister for Trade, Simon Crean and Australian High Commissioner to Samoa, Matt Anderson with APTC students

APTC Samoa received a strong endorsement by the Australia's Minister of Trade, Simon Crean and Parliamentary Secretary for Aid and Development, Senator Bob McMullen, that underscored the success of the College.

The School of Tourism & Hospitality (STH) and the School of Automotive, Construction & Electrical, and Manufacturing (ACEM) were praised by Minister Crean and Senator McMullen after touring the facilities and meeting with many of

their students.

Minister Crean and Senator McMullen expressed their confidence in APTC in Samoa, lauding the quality of facilities and expressing their satisfaction at the level of training and the enthusiasm and commitment of the students.

Both Australian politicians were in Samoa to promote PACER (Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations) and had an opportunity to visit the APTC Samoa campus.

## Revisit the campuses

Some may be confused when APTC mentions its four campuses located in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu, collectively forming the College.

APTC is aligned with existing private and government training and business facilities in each of the island countries where it has campuses.

The campuses are defined by their training programmes:

- **Fiji:** School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) School of Automotive, Construction & Electrical, and Manufacturing (ACEM) School of Health and Community Services (SHCS)
- **Samoa:** School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) School of Automotive, Construction & Electrical, and Manufacturing (ACEM)
- **Papua New Guinea:** School of Automotive, Construction & Electrical, and Manufacturing (ACEM)
- **Vanuatu:** School of Tourism and Hospitality (STH) School of Health and Community Services (SHCS)

APTC and its Schools do not duplicate existing programmes in the island countries where campuses are located, but offer courses that complement and add value to the local TVET courses. APTC policy is to hold graduation ceremonies for its students in their home countries no matter which APTC school that they attend in the region.

## Tonga graduates now part of APTC Alumni



APTC staff and graduates with the Honorable Fineasi Funaki and Dr Bruce Hunt (seated), Australian High Commissioner to Kingdom of Tonga

A less publicised but as an important part of the APTC student experience is its Alumni.

This was highlighted by Anthony Bailey, Head of the School of Tourism & Hospitality, during the STH graduation ceremony, March 20th, that saw seventeen students receive their Certificates in Tonga.

He told the graduates, nine in Certificate III in Commercial Cookery, and eight in Tourism (Operations), that they are now part of the Australia-Pacific Technical College Alumni, with a bright future ahead. Many APTC Tongan Alumni were in

the audience to emphasise the point.

The Guest of Honour and keynote speaker, the Honourable Mr Fineasi Funaki, Minister of Tourism, thanked the Australian Government for the AusAID funded APTC initiative.

The Honourable Minister then spoke to the students about their future role in the development of the Tongan tourism and hospitality industry, saying, "Not only will you be graduating with a formal certificate, but your qualification will be internationally recognised and marketable within the booming tourism industry."

## Meet the trainer



NEIL Atkinson is a Wall & Floor Tiling Trainer in the School of Automotive, Construction, & Electrical and Manufacturing (ACEM) for APTC - a position he has held since September 2007.

Neil, who hails from the Gold Coast, Australia, is one of the longest serving APTC trainers beginning with ACEM at the Suva campus of TPAF - an APTC training partner.

Working with students from around the South Pacific, Neil cannot get over the quality of the students and their enthusiasm to learn.

*In each issue, you will have the opportunity to meet the trainers working at the four campuses.*

### STATISTICS AT MARCH 2009

Total Graduates from APTC: 309				
Current enrolments:				
Campus Country	ACEM	HCS	STH	Total
Fiji	142	31	190	363
PNG	328	0	0	328
Samoa	224	0	93	317
Vanuatu	0	47	120	167
Cumulative Total	694	78	403	1175

**WRITE TO US**

We will produce the publication on a regular basis to help keep you informed of developments. We are asking for your support. If you would please forward to [virgo@connect.com.fj](mailto:virgo@connect.com.fj) news and/or photographs that you believe would be useful for the newsletter, we would very much appreciate your efforts. For further information visit [www.aptc.edu.au](http://www.aptc.edu.au) or contact [antoine.barnaart@aptc.edu.au](mailto:antoine.barnaart@aptc.edu.au)