

Upskilling Scholarships

Red Meat Processing Upskilling Scholarship
Program

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1.0 Executive Summary

This project forms a component of AMPC's Integrated Scholarship Program. This component delivered an upskilling scholarship program for exiting red meat processing employees. Twenty five scholarships of \$5000 each were made available, initially over a five-year period which was extended by six months and ending 30th June 2021 to allow more students to complete their studies.

This Upskilling Scholarship Program has enabled existing meat industry personnel to upgrade their current knowledge and qualifications. By supporting the upskilling of exiting workers the program will ensure red meat processing companies and the greater industry are addressing the current skills shortages, building plant capacity in a dynamic and changing environment and ensuring succession planning is in place.

The project allowed existing red meat industry personnel to upgrade their skills at Certificate IV level or higher. The study was matched to a detailed career pathway plan and included agreement with the employer for allocated time away from work to study and attend classes.

A scholarship committee was identified, a selection criteria and application process were developed, and the advertising material was created, all was presented and approved by AMPC.

Advertising started in December 2015 and six applications were received for the 2016 round. MINTRAC presented the applications to AMPC, and all were awarded as successful candidates for the scholarship program.

It had been difficult to find applicants for the 2017 year. Advertising started in December 2016 and continued throughout 2017 with articles in newsletters and regular emails being sent out to industry. The scholarships have also advertised at network meetings, including the engineering and environment networks, however only one application was received in early June.

Advertising for the scholarships continued throughout 2018 both at network meetings and in the MINTRACker newsletter. Initially there were no applications but three were received and accepted in last quarter of 2018 and the recipients started their study in 2019. After a bit of a lull in applications there were seven new Upskilling Scholarships awarded in the first three months of 2019. The last seven new Upskilling Scholarships awarded were awarded early 2020. All twenty-five scholarships have been awarded.

The list of studies undertaken include:

- ◆ Certificate IV in Business
- ◆ Certificate IV in Meat Processing (QA)
- ◆ Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)
- ◆ Certificate IV in Work, Health and Safety
- ◆ Certificate IV in Leadership and mentoring
- ◆ Certificate IV in Logistics
- ◆ Certificate IV in Instrument and Control
- ◆ Diploma of Human Resource Management
- ◆ Diploma of Meat Processing
- ◆ Diploma of Project Management
- ◆ Diploma of Business
- ◆ Company Director's Course
- ◆ Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management

- ◆ Bachelor of Agriculture
- ◆ Bachelor of Agriculture/ Bachelor of Business
- ◆ Bachelor of Engineering (Honors) in Mechanical Engineering.
- ◆ Master of Agribusiness

The first study skills webinar was held on Friday 24 June. The topic was Time Management, one of the topics identified by the scholarship holders as being of interest to them in a recent survey. The webinar was conducted by Barbara Clifford, who is a consultant specialising in time management and productivity. The second study skills webinar was not held as there were no new scholarship recipients at that time. A third study skills webinar was not held as there have not been any new scholarships holders join the group. There was no interest within the group for another webinar, mainly due to time restraints and the difficulty of being able to get everyone together at the same time. The diversity of programs, levels and institutions suggests that there was little commonality between the students in relation to study needs which made further webinars untenable.

The online support network hasn't been utilised as effectively as planned. Most of the students don't view the posts or comment so the posts have been infrequent. Also, many of the topics chosen were easily accessible to the students through their own searches so weren't always that interesting for them.

Regular posts are being made however there still is very little interaction from the group. In conversations with the scholarship holders some of the posts are mentioned in passing but they are more likely to respond to an email than an online post.

The range of topics has been expanded to include ones that although not relating directly to study may have some benefit to the group ie time management and better memory techniques. Questions are included in the posts to encourage members to provide examples of their own experiences or advice for other group members, but this has not resulted in an increase in interaction. This is possibly due to the lack of time they have to spend looking and discussing topics on the posts. Once COVID-19 continued to be a cause disruptions and steal time from students and to planned conferences and face to face interaction responses to email was most effective.

In October 2019 at the MINTRAC MI&QA conference two scholarship holders presented on how the scholarships have added to their careers. The overall feedback from the audience was very positive and supportive.

Of all the Upskilling scholarship recipients fourteen has completed their scholarship requirements which included proof of study completion, scholarship completion report which includes a four hundred word report.

Three have discontinued or had been removed for various reasons and eight have not completed within the project timeframe with all details having been handed over to AMPC at the conclusion of the project. With the advent of COVID-19 impact on workplaces and indeed personal time, several participants did fall behind with their studies which has shown in the completion rate for this project.

Overall the project has provided exceptional opportunities for each of the participants in the program, with many of the participants going on to supervisor roles whilst still completing their studies.

The Red Meat Processing Upskilling Scholarship Program has given recipients opportunities to take part in studies to further their own futures as well as expand the skills of the plants the students are employed at. Since all scholarships have been awarded there have been numerous requests for further scholarships, which MINTRAC have referred to AMPC. If the program were to rerun MINTRAC believes with some small changes the program could be very successful. This would include a built in extension of time to cover the inevitable delays that workplace pressures often take over study and with the development of digital tools since COVID-19 has pushing so many resources and information online.

2.0 Introduction

- ◆ This project forms a component of AMPC's Integrated Scholarship Program. This component delivered an upskilling scholarship program for exiting red meat processing employees. Twenty five scholarships of \$5000 each were made available, initially over a five-year period which was extended by six months and ending 30th June 2021 to allow more students to complete their studies.
- ◆ This Upskilling Scholarship Program has enabled existing meat industry personnel to upgrade their current knowledge and qualifications. By supporting the upskilling of exiting workers the program will ensure red meat processing companies and the greater industry are addressing the current skills shortages, building plant capacity in a dynamic and changing environment and ensuring succession planning is in place.

3.0 Project Objectives

3.1 The objectives of this project are:

- ◆ the successful identification of appropriate industry personnel for scholarship support and their timely completion of their upskilling initiative
- ◆ the provision of a support network to provide support to scholarship recipients in completing their upskilling initiative
- ◆ provision of administrative support to scholarship recipients throughout their upskilling initiative.

4.0 Methodology

MINTRAC will undertake the following activities:

- ◆ Prepare a detailed selection criteria and application process.
 - Twenty-five upskilling scholarships of \$5000 will be available, and funds will be paid directly to the sponsoring processing company.
 - Applications must be accompanied by a career development plan and letter from the employee outlining how they will be supporting the employee in their study e.g. allocation of time to complete reports and study.
- ◆ Set up a scholarships review committee. This committee will be responsible for reviewing all the applications that are received. The shortlisted applicants and a company representative will participate in a telephone interview with the committee.
- ◆ Prepare promotional and advertising strategy in approved AMPC styles.
 - Develop criteria for scholarships in consultation with AMPC.
 - Advertise the scholarship program in an approved format through existing network meetings and mail out to red meat processing levy paying companies.
- ◆ Develop an online support network.

- Participation in this group will be compulsory for all scholarship recipients.
- Networking will be encouraged through discussion topics, Q&A sessions.
- Links to online study skills will be posted fortnightly, including links to mentors, templates and events.
- ◆ Prepare one online study skills webinar per year in consultation with AMPC.
- Following a study needs survey of scholarship holders, interactive webinars will be developed using contracted consultants.
- Webinars will be recorded with the aim of developing a library of comprehensive study skills to be used throughout the project and future scholarship holders.
- ◆ Manage the scholarship holders.
- Regular monitoring through emails and phone calls to ensure reporting requirements are being met including written reports from the scholarship holder and company, results and evidence of employment at the company.
- Financial administration.
- Regular updates of progress to AMPC and industry.
- Preparation of progress reports to the scholarships committee.

5.0 Project Outcomes

Fourteen participants have completed their scholarship requirements which included proof of study completion, scholarship completion report which includes a four hundred word report.

Three have discontinued or had been removed for various reasons.

Eight have not completed within the project timeframe with all details having been handed over to AMPC at the conclusion of the project.

The full list of outcomes is attached in appendices.

6.0 Discussion

The conclusion of the project has seen fourteen participants whom all work in the Red Meat Processing industry now upskilled and moving forward in their career paths. All plants involved will benefit from the skills that each participant has gained through their studies, which they will now bring into the work place if they have not already. Eight further participants are still studying and providing benefit to both of them own careers and the plants they work at.

7.0 Conclusions / Recommendations

In conclusion the project once known to the Red Meat Industry was well received and embraced, MINTRAC would recommend to re run the project, if possible, with the below recommendations:

- ◆ Move to digital short courses for interactions with a variety of applicable subjects e.g.: time management and writing reports that are suitable no matter which subject is being studied.

- ◆ Impressing on the plants that the participants must have time for study
- ◆ Perhaps spreading the payments over three, one at the commencement, second on suitable progress and third at completion.

8.0 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1

List of participants courses and outcomes.

Appendix 1.

The cumulative list of completed and current scholarship holders is below:

Andrew Christou	Maintenance Electrician at JBS Australia Brooklyn	Certificate IV Instrument and Control.	COMPLETED
Amelia Forrest	Recruitment Coordinator at Thomas Borthwick and Sons	Diploma of Human Resource Management.	COMPLETED
Grant Melrose	Project Manager at John Dee Warwick	Master of Agribusiness.	COMPLETED
Grant Braddock	Depot Manager at D&R Johnson Group, a division of JBS Australia	Diploma of Meat Processing	DISCONTINUED
Kate Power	Nolan Meats	Bachelor of Agriculture	COMPLETED
Jonty Hemmingway	Wingham Beef Exports	Bachelor of Agriculture/ Bachelor of Business	COMPLETED
Leigh Kane	Midfield Meats	Certificate IV in Business	COMPLETED
Shane Byron	Midfield Meats	Diploma of Project Management	COMPLETED
Anni de Pontes	Oakey Beef	Diploma of Business	COMPLETED
Angelique Dillion	NCMC	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Quality Assurance)	COMPLETED
David Klaassen	NCMC	Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management	COMPLETED
Yong Chen	WAMMCO	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)	INCOMPLETE
Robyn Hunter	WAMMCO	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)	INCOMPLETE
Samana Nazarie	WAMMCO	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)	INCOMPLETE
Jessica Pickett	WAMMCO	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)	WITHDRAWN
Mohammed Frois Takbir	WAMMCO	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)	INCOMPLETE

El Say.	WAMMCO	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)	INCOMPLETE
Greg Williams	NCMC	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering.	DISCONTINUED
Grant Melrose	John Dee Warwick	Company Director's Course with the Australian Institute of Company Directors.	COMPLETED
Parambir Singh	Harvey Industries Group Pty Ltd	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Quality Assurance)	COMPLETED
Kasidah Jamil	Harvey Industries Group Pty Ltd	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Quality Assurance)	COMPLETED
Joshua Grover	Hillside Meat Processing	Certificate IV in Leadership and Mentoring	INCOMPLETE
Debbie Haymes	Hillside Meat Processing	Certificate IV in Work, Health and Safety	COMPLETED
Nicklhei Andrada	Hillside Meat Processing	Certificate IV in Leadership and mentoring	INCOMPLETE
Lance Asuncion	Hillside Meat Processing	Certificate IV in Meat Processing (Meat Safety)	COMPLETED
Louella Asuncion	Hillside Meat Processing	Certificate IV Logistics	INCOMPLETE