

MEMBERSHIP FORUM AVETRA 1999

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One of the objectives of the 1999 AVETRA Conference to discuss the broad purpose of AVETRA and what its chief directions in the future might be.

During the first morning of the conference the views of members were sought in a forum. There were over 180 members present at this which represented a one of the largest gathering of researchers, managers of research, end users of research, purchasers of research, research students and VET practitioners.

During the forum several roles were identified by members that AVETRA could fulfil in the future.

1. Issue Identification Role

AVETRA is uniquely positioned through the diversity of its membership to identify issues and needs that might be the subject of research. This role would be important in identifying emerging issues worthy of research.

2. Representational Role

AVETRA has been identified as having a potential representational role to lobby on behalf of the general benefit of AVETRA members and VET research in general. The role would include representations to government, funding agencies, VET systems and industry bodies.

3. The Sponsoring Role

One of the key issues identified was the need to provide opportunities to enhance the capacity of VET research through measure to sponsor members. This could happen through

- Professional development programs for VET researchers.
- Sponsored projects funded by AVETRA.
- Research mentoring programs.

This role has been identified as assisting develop collaborations and partnership between members to facilitate a seamless approach to research

This role also requires the commitment of AVETRA resources to support projects.

4. Dissemination Role

This role positions AVETRA as a nationally important source of information on VET research and research data. The prime strategies associated with this role are the

- The AVETRA annual conference.
- The AVETRA newsletter *Research Today* to members.
- *The Australian and New Zealand Vocational Education Research Journal*.
- The AVETRA online web page.

In this role AVETRA was seen as crucial in showcasing the work of VET researchers.

The forum was valuable in identify the directions that the membership of AVETRA saw as vital in developing supporting the development of quality research in vocational educational research. The feedback from the forum provided an important focus for the activities of the AVETRA executive during 1999.