



Volume 7, Issue 8

September 2009

**Special points of interest:**

- Breeanna and Darren join the MINTRAC team
- 93% of participants improved the sharpness of their knives whilst undergoing the MINTRAC workshop.
- Become a MINTRAC Associate Member!
- Congratulations to Katrina Lacey for successfully completing her Masters in HR Management

**Inside this issue:**

VET in schools	2
Masters in the Meat Industry	3
Knife Sharpening	4
Leadership Program 09-10	5
MI & QA Conference	6
Meat Retail Conference	7
Domestic networks trial	8

**MINTRAC Fast Track Lead Organisation Project**

Butchery apprenticeships will come under close scrutiny over the next two years as MINTRAC undertakes the role of Lead Organisation to support the uptake of Fast Track Butchery apprenticeships across Australia.

**Project Manager appointed**



Darren Scott, Meat Retailing teacher and experienced butcher from Tasmania, has been appointed as the Project Manager for the MINTRAC Fast Track Butchery Lead Organisation Project.

Darren has over 23 years of meat retailing experience, plus experience as coach, mentor and trainer for butchery apprentices.

"This is a fantastic and positive initiative from the Federal Government, dually supported by MINTRAC and State based RTOs," said Darren. "The planned vision for the industry's future is set to have a three-fold-effect, a greater number of qualified trade persons, and measurable

increases in both retention and completion rates. I look forward to heading this project, working with some great people, all within an industry that is both rewarding, and has so much to offer".

**What is the Fast Track Lead Organisation Project?**

The Fast Track Apprenticeships Program is an Australian Government initiative which provides opportunities for apprentices to achieve their qualifications earlier by becoming competent in a shorter time. MINTRAC's Lead Organisation role has been funded through the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

MINTRAC will work with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to trial, evaluate and refine models of Fast Tracking and then promote them to RTOs across Australia to encourage and support national take-up of Fast Tracking butchery apprenticeships. Through this initiative, MINTRAC seeks to increase the number of new butchery apprentices and also to improve retention and completion rates.

Throughout the project, MINTRAC will be focusing on ensuring that the quality and integrity of the butchery apprenticeship is not compromised in any way.

"Over the past couple of years MINTRAC has fostered a climate of peer review between meat retailing Registered Training Organisations," said Jenny Kroonstuiver. "Individual RTOs are encouraged to present their training strategies and materials at the national meat retailing conference each year. This provides an opportunity for RTOs to comment on the strategies and approaches and to learn from each other."

**National Steering Committee appointed**

A National Steering Committee of key stakeholders including AMIC (employer association), AMIEU (union), RTO, Australian Apprenticeship Centres, MINTRAC and local employers has been appointed to monitor and address critical issues underpinning the project. The committee will meet for the first time in September.

**Official launch**

Although work has already commenced on the project, it will be officially launched at the MINTRAC Meat Retailing Conference in November 2009.

For more information contact Darren Scott: [Darren.Scott@skillsinstitute.tas.edu.au](mailto:Darren.Scott@skillsinstitute.tas.edu.au) or Jenny Kroonstuiver: [jkroonstuiver@mintrac.com.au](mailto:jkroonstuiver@mintrac.com.au)

## Upcoming Events

### Meat Hygiene Assessment

15-16 September 2009  
Victoria

### Training Managers Network Meetings

17 September 2009  
Queensland

8 October 2009  
Western Australia

### QA Managers Network Meeting

18 September 2009  
Queensland

9 October 2009  
Western Australia

### Domestic Network Meeting

1 October 2009  
Tasmania

23 October 2009  
Western Australia

### HACCP Principles & Applications

6-7 October 2009  
Brisbane

### QA for Supervisors

6-7 October 2009  
Smithton, Tasmania

### HACCP Refresher

13 October 2009  
Victoria

### MI & QA National Conference

14-15 October 2009  
Stamford Plaza Brisbane

### Meat Retail Trainers Conference

18-19 November 2009  
Springwood, Brisbane

## VET in Schools

The VET in Schools in the Meat Industry Kit is complete and ready for trial in meat processing plants across Australia.

The kit provides re-printable resources to help anyone interested in setting up a VET in Schools program or School based apprenticeship/traineeship in any sector of the industry. It can be used by employers, RTOs or schools.

The kit contains information about:

- State policies and guidelines
- OHS information for parents, teachers and students
- communication plans and charts for all stakeholders
- checklists for consultation

- with all stakeholders
- information that would be relevant to each stakeholder
- case studies and model programs
- careers information for promotional purposes.

The kit will be trialed by:

- Charleville State High School in conjunction with a local meat processing plant and meat retailer in Queensland
- Swift Southern in Victoria.
- Training Solutions Australia with their meat processing clients.

MINTRAC is looking for meat processors in NSW and SA to also trial the kit. If you are

interested in participating in the trials and setting up a school based traineeship program, please contact Jodie Hummerston on 0409 092 370 or email [jhummerston@mintrac.com.au](mailto:jhummerston@mintrac.com.au).

The kit will be available for sale before the end of the year.



- ◆ Do you need your core unit CDs customised to your plant?
- ◆ Do you need the CDs translated into other languages?

## MINTRAC can do this.

The Certificate II Core CDs are already available in five languages and are currently being translated into Korean. If this isn't enough, talk to MINTRAC.

We can negotiate a price per CD, including the cost of the translation and the time it takes us to convert the CDs into different languages, or customise the CDs to meet the needs of your company.

Phone Jodie Hummerston on 0409 092 370 or email [jhummerston@mintrac.com.au](mailto:jhummerston@mintrac.com.au)



## MINTRAC Associate Membership

MINTRAC Associates have access to a range of products and services including the right to purchase MINTRAC products at a reduced price, up to two places at each MINTRAC Professional

Development workshop and registration to MINTRAC conferences all at meat processing levy payer prices. MINTRAC Associates also get up to 20 hours free consultancy advice per annum

from MINTRAC staff. To become a MINTRAC Associate member please visit our website and download an application form or alternatively contact the office for further information.

## Masters in the Meat Industry

MINTRAC would like to congratulate Upskilling Scholarship student Katrina Lacey for successfully completing her Masters in Human Resource Management.

Katrina began her Upskilling scholarship and postgraduate degree in 2007 while employed as the Group International Labour Manager with Teys Bros (Holdings) Pty Ltd, Beenleigh.

As with all Upskilling scholarships, MINTRAC paid 70% of her course fees. "The financial assistance of this scholarship has been greatly appreciated. It has allowed me

to achieve something very important to my career, eliminating the financial strain and therefore diminishing the time it would take to complete this degree" said Katrina. "The journey of learning has strengthened my knowledge base in areas for which I already had exposure and also introduced new facets of Human Resources. All subjects completed in the Masters course directly enhanced the practices within my current role at Teys Bros".

Through completing her Masters, Katrina has achieved her personal development aims and hopes to be a role model for other women in the

Australian meat industry.

Katrina is continuing on her career path and MINTRAC wishes her all the best in her future career.

MINTRAC Upskilling Scholarships are available throughout the year.

[Click here to download an application form.](#)



## What's happening with the Training and Assessment materials development project?

Work is continuing on the development of Training and Assessment resources for the remaining Units of Competency in the MTM07 *Australian Meat Industry Training Package*. Completion is now expected at the end of October.

Work on updating twenty-three of the Units (Diploma and some imported Units) will be delayed beyond this date, as substantial changes have been recommended for these Units under Continuous Improvement of the Training Package.

As soon as these recommended changes have been activated, Training and

Assessment materials for the updated Units of Competency will be developed.

Progress on the development as at the end of August is as follows:

Finished	50
Proof reading commenced	14
Industry validation commenced	7
Still being written	30
Delayed pending changes to the Training Package	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>

Reviewers are still required for some Smallgoods materials – if you can help out please contact Jenny Kroonstuiver on [jkroonstuiver@mintrac.com.au](mailto:jkroonstuiver@mintrac.com.au).

## Welcome Breeanna

Breeanna is the newest addition to the MINTRAC team. As Office Administrator Trainee Breeanna will learn step by step the way in which MINTRAC operates and provide valuable support to all

staff members.

Breeanna is originally from Perth and has only recently moved to Sydney and is quickly adjusting to both a new job and city.



## Products

### Managing Diversity in the Meat Industry kit

Regular Price: \$220.00  
MP Levy payer price: \$110.00



### Food Safety Auditing Kit

Regular Price: \$220.00  
MP Levy payer price: \$110.00



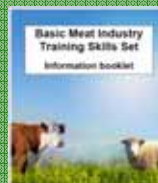
### Careers Brochure

Free of charge  
(Postage and handling charges may apply)



### Basic Meat Industry Training Skills Set

Free of charge  
(Postage and handling charges may apply)



### Communicate in the Workplace

Regular Price: \$220.00  
MP Levy payer price: \$110.00



## Knife Sharpening

Two years ago MINTRAC undertook to ascertain the "state of knife sharpness" in the Australian processing sector. Utilising data gathered by RTOs in South East Australia, 1880 knives were tested using the Anago knife sharpness testing machine.

The results were disturbing with less than 50% of workers having a sharp knife. Similar research in NZ indicated that knife sharpness in the meat processing industry had been similar before the industry adopted a new approach to knife sharpening and training.

This highly successful NZ approach to knife sharpening, developed by Silver Fern Foods, has now been implemented widely throughout NZ and has significantly improved the average knife sharpening ability of workers in that country.

MINTRAC introduced the Australian meat processing industry to this NZ program at its 2008 National Conference. Since then MINTRAC has been working hard to support

companies to introduce the stoning and steeling training into plants here.

Seven workshops have been held around Australia to introduce processors and training organisations to the NZ approach to knife sharpening and now 15 companies are introducing this technique in 21 sites. This work is being undertaken utilising AMPC and MLA funding through plant initiated projects at each site.

To date, the training has been delivered at 7 sites and the response has been

overwhelmingly favorable.

Supervisors have been given intensive training and then supported in training workers off the floor. The Anago knife sharpness testing machine has shown significant improvements in individual performance. The best thing about this program is that green workers achieve knife sharpening proficiency very quickly.

For more information please contact Clive Richardson on 0409 438 390.

*"The results were disturbing with less than 50% of workers having a sharp knife"*

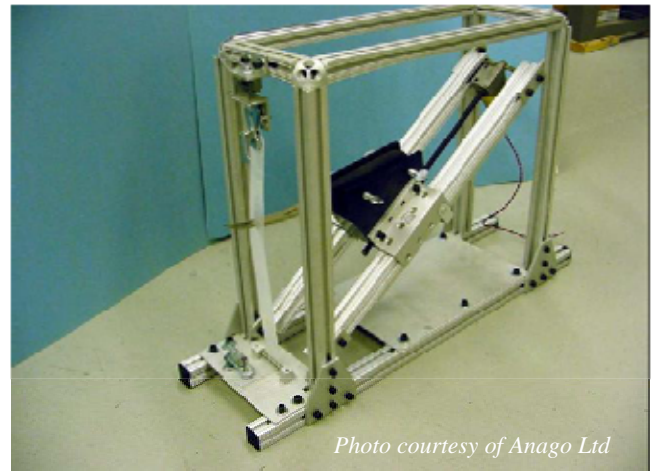


Photo courtesy of Anago Ltd

## Knife hands hone their skills in knife sharpening workshops

Seventeen meat processing plants have taken up the opportunity to use their PIP funds to participate in a series of knife sharpening workshops being run over the next twelve months.

The workshops enable on-site trainers and/or supervisors to undertake training in order to be able to effectively train all employees in a standardised knife sharpening and steeling program.

By the end of August, forty-two on-site trainers across five plants had completed the

training and all were enthusiastic in their views of the program. Over 80% of the participants had been using knives for longer than eight years.

*"Nice and simple to understand to get great results. I wish this was available when I first started on a knife"*

Knife sharpness results were gathered before and after the training and 93% of participants improved the

sharpness of their knives during the course.

All participants claimed they had learned new knife sharpening techniques, were surprised at how easy the techniques were, and believed they were now prepared to provide effective training at their plant.



Photos courtesy Hepworths

## Leadership Program 2009-2010

The Leadership group of 2009-10 is now half way through the program and everyone is praising the training.

To date, the group has taken part in one Leadership workshop, undertaken two Units of Competency from the Advanced Diploma of Meat Processing (*Manage finances and Benchmark enterprise performance*), and participated in a workshop on Performance Management.

Each member of the group is progressing well, learning some valuable management tools and proving to their

assessment tasks that they will be the future leaders of the industry.

More than once we have heard the phrase "my brain hurts," but always with a smile on the face of the speaker and

an eagerness to push it further and soak up even more knowledge. The group will meet again in mid-September in Perth for their third Unit of Competency, *Analyse enterprise systems for new opportunities*.



*"it's been great being able to network with other industry types on a national level as well as gain some more valuable tools for improving business operations"*  
*"I fully recommend this program for the industry to help build more leaders for the future."*

## Introducing a future leader of the red meat processing industry

### Vince Macri



Vince is the QA Manager of his family's meat processing plant, Beaufort River Meats, in Beaufort River (Kojonup), WA. He has worked for the business for ten years and has a good deal of experience and knowledge of the entire operation.

Vince's short term goals are to mentor and upskill one of his QA officers to prepare them for the role of QA Manager, which will allow him to focus on other areas of the business, including business compliance, plant efficiency improvement, cost reduction and forward planning.

Already, through the

Leadership program, Vince has been improving the plant through benchmarking their OHS systems on each floor.

His company supports his goals and believes he will succeed in any role that he chooses to take on.



With a new wife, a busy schedule at work and being the only participant from WA in this year's program, Vince is certainly dedicated to training taking on the leadership program this year. He has asked us to mention that he has really enjoyed the Leadership Program and Advanced Diploma and says "it's been great being able to

network with other industry types on a national level as well as gain some more valuable tools for improving business operations. I fully recommend this program for the industry to help build more leaders for the future."



In amongst work, study and adapting to married life, Vince has still managed to find time to play in the local footy team and help them reach the grand final, which will be played this weekend. He also tries to get in some quality family and friend time, fishing, diving and golf whenever possible.

He is an enthusiast for life and an asset to the industry.

# 6th Annual Meat Inspection and Quality Assurance National Conference

14 -15 October  
Stamford Plaza, Brisbane

*This year's conference will include speakers from Australia and overseas delivering on the latest developments in QA programs, meat microbiology, animal welfare, animal health and regulatory arrangements.*

*The conference offers a unique opportunity not only to hear from leading technical experts but also to network with upwards of 100 QA, regulatory and training personnel from all over Australia.*

**Register Now!**

At

[www.mintrac.com.au](http://www.mintrac.com.au)



## Meat Retail Conference

This year Axial Training will host the fourth annual MINTRAC Meat Retail Trainers' Conference in Springwood, Brisbane.

The focus of the conference will be on improving completion rates in meat retail qualifications and will include presentations by an independent meat retailer, supermarkets, AMIC, MLA

and RTOs.

At the request of delegates in last year's conference, there will be a workshop on knife sharpening, using the Argus Realcold Butcher's Buddy, and a training session on conducting Listeria testing in meat retail establishments.

In addition, Axial staff will deliver an assessment

moderation workshop to ensure we are getting consistency across the board. Delegates will also have the chance to showcase their own training resources.

The conference will run across two days, 18 and 19 November 2009 at Axial House in Springwood, QLD. Accommodation is available within ten minutes walk of the venue.

Download the draft program and registration form from [www.mintrac.com.au](http://www.mintrac.com.au)

For more information contact Jodie Hummerston on 0409 092 370 or email [jhummerston@mintrac.com.au](mailto:jhummerston@mintrac.com.au)

*This year's conference is proudly sponsored by:*



### Meat Retail Trainers' Conference

18 & 19 November 2009

Axial House,  
Springwood, Brisbane



## Diploma Of Meat Processing

MINTRAC is funding Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE to deliver the Unit of Competency *Assess and Purchase Livestock* through online learning.

There are fifteen places available to red meat levy payers but you must enrol

before the end of December. Learners will be provided with a CD of training resources to work through at their own pace, however they must complete within a predetermined time frame. They will have access to a trainer to assist them when necessary.

Learners will need to complete at least some of their assessment tasks in the sale yards or livestock pens at an abattoir.

Contact Jeff Bradbury on 07 4694 1846 to enrol.





MINTRAC  
Suite 2, 150 Victoria Rd  
Drummoyle NSW 2047

Phone: 02 9819 6699

Fax: 02 9819 6099

E-mail:

mintrac@mintrac.com.au

Web: www.mintrac.com.au

## Domestic networks trial an outstanding success

Over the last three months, MINTRAC has been working with AMIC to trial the domestic networks in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. The trial has now ended and it is clear that there is good support for the new networks.

The new networks have created an invaluable opportunity to address issues as an industry group, in discussion with the regulator, away from the pressures of the plant. The initiative to create a domestic network enables a focus on domestic issues. For MINTRAC, it means we can identify areas of training that need to be addressed through the MINTRAC professional development program.

The first meeting was held in May at Peppers Resort in Torquay in **Victoria**. Twelve representatives from nine processing plants joined the two-day meeting, which was also attended by representatives from PrimeSafe, DPI Victoria, AMIC and MINTRAC. Topics of discussion included:

- PrimeSafe licensee charter and compliance programs
- Tier 1 – access to market discussion
- overviews of MLA, AMPC, AMIC and MINTRAC activities

- customer audits and BRC standards
- NLIS and traceability
- on-plant product integrity systems
- lamb branding
- a joint processor/retail meeting.

The **South Australian** meeting commenced with a dinner on the 30 June and all-day meeting on 1 July in Adelaide. Seven representatives from four processing companies were joined by representatives from SA Department of Primary Industries & Resources, AMIC, AMPC, MLA, and MINTRAC. Topics of discussion included:

- food regulation
- overviews of MLA, AMPC, AMIC and MINTRAC activities
- Youth Development Program
- OH&S
- NLIS performance and feedback session
- joint AMIC SA Industry Group meeting.

Representatives from domestic meat processing plants from all over **New South Wales** gathered in Canberra on Tuesday (29 July) for a dinner and one-day conference addressing a wide range of issues confronting domestic meat processors.

Twenty representatives from eleven processing companies were joined by representatives from NSW Food Authority, AMIC, MLA, AMPC and MINTRAC.

Topics of discussion included:

- food safety compliance issues in NSW
- overviews of MLA, AMPC, AMIC and MINTRAC activities
- OH&S - improving return to work procedures
- what's new in HR and IR in NSW?
- NLIS Performance and feedback session
- product identification and traceability compliance issues including lamb branding
- managing OH&S risk in abattoirs
- third party auditing and NSW Food Authority.

The network meetings are funded by the Australian Meat Processors Corporation (AMPC) and Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA).

These organisations have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to these networks by supporting the running of further meetings in every state between July 2009 and June 2010.

## Honour Boards record MINTRAC award winners



Honour Boards recording the national winners of the MINTRAC Training Awards have now been erected in the MINTRAC Offices. Made by wood turner Eric Swann from WA jarrah, the four Boards are now located in the MINTRAC reception area. Details of the 2010 awards will be advertised in the December MINTRACker.

