



Media Statement

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Survey confirms business is driving skill development

New Zealand businesses are spending greater amounts to upskill their staff, according to the latest Skills and Training Survey.

Respondents to the 2007 survey, run by Business NZ and the Industry Training Federation, spent a median of 2.5 per cent of their payroll on training, up from 2.0 per cent in the 2003 results.

Business NZ chief executive Phil O'Reilly and Industry Training Federation executive director Jeremy Baker say this reflects a growing commitment by businesses to invest in training.

Mr O'Reilly says firms see training as an important way of improving the quality of their services, keeping customers happy and holding on to good staff.

"If all New Zealand firms spent this much, business would be spending \$1.7 billion on staff development – about as much as the government spends on secondary schooling in a year."

Ninety percent of the firms surveyed had provided some form of training to their staff in the past two years, with that figure rising to one hundred per cent for large firms (100+ employees).

The majority of those surveyed were satisfied with the relevance of training on offer. They were most satisfied with training conducted by in-house line staff, private training providers and Industry Training Organisations; and were least satisfied with universities and Modern Apprenticeship coordinators.

Mr Baker says businesses surveyed clearly value the contribution Industry Training makes to their performance and bottom lines.

“More than 90 per cent agreed it either significantly or slightly improved business performance. We hope to build on that base by looking at ways in which training that occurs in workplaces can be used even more effectively,” Mr Baker says.

The survey also reinforces the need for focussed action on workplace literacy, with 35 per cent of firms surveyed stating that at least some of their employees had difficulties with such tasks as filling in forms, understanding safety warning or accurately measuring volumes. Manufacturing, construction and infrastructure firms were most likely to report literacy and numeracy gaps.

The Business NZ-Industry Training Federation Skills and Training Survey was carried out with assistance from the Department of Labour.