Skillnets
Enterprise-led
learning networks

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2008

Skillnets Mandate

Skillnets Ltd has operated since 1999 under a series of mandates from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE).
The current mandate runs from 2005-2010 inclusive.

The terms of this mandate define Skillnets' role as follows:

- The primary aim should be to increase participation in enterprise training by firms to improve competitiveness and provide improved access for workers to skills development.

- To act as an enterprise-led support body dedicated to the promotion and facilitation of enterprise training and workplace learning, as a key element in sustaining national competitiveness.

- To foster and support an enterprise-led, networked and partnership approach to the provision of enterprise training and expand and develop that approach by supporting innovation and enhanced workplace learning.

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Chairman's Message

During 2008 the global economy experienced unprecedented change and the Irish economy is now facing possibly the biggest challenge since the foundation of the state. Under these circumstances, Skillnets came through a difficult period with a significant reduction in our funding at the end of 2008 and further reductions in 2009. In spite of these challenges, the Skillnets model has proved to be a robust model which can adapt to the changing demands of markets. In 2008, 123 training networks commenced, involving 22,724 member companies and training 56,126 people in employment. Skillnets invested €25 million and member companies invested €11.5 million.

The case for continued upskilling of people in employment remains strong even as the numbers of unemployed in the country rises. In fact a further increase in the level of training and upskilling in present circumstances would greatly enhance the prospects for the survival and profitable growth of Irish businesses, particularly SMEs. Research shows the vital role which small to medium enterprises (SMEs) play in fostering innovation, creativity, adaptability and employment generation. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report 2008 reflects that Ireland is at the forefront of entrepreneurial activity in Europe with the rate of early stage entrepreneurial activity at 7.6% and the rate of established entrepreneurs at 9%. On average 2,800 individuals are setting up new businesses every month and it is therefore vital that we continue to train people in SMEs for our economy to remain competitive and innovation driven.

To further endorse the case for in-employment training a survey in 2008 of 6,000 member companies involved in the Training Networks Programme (TNP) 2008 – 2009 resulted in 82% stating that there was a positive impact on their competitiveness and 87% stating there was an impact on quality within their organisations. 78% of companies stated that the Skillnets Training Networks Programme (TNP) was more flexible being enterprise-led and 82% felt the training provided was better suited to their business needs.

In 2008 Skillnets achieved, met and exceeded on targets set for the organisation by the Board through Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). I would like to congratulate and thank our Chief Executive, management and staff members for their successes and continued dedication to the work of developing human resource capacity.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution and hard work of the following Board members who resigned in 2008: Mr. John Dunne, Chambers Ireland and Mr. John Daly, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) and to welcome the following new appointees: Noelle O'Connell, Construction Industry Federation (CIF), Ian Talbot, Chambers Ireland and John McDermott, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE).

The delivery of the Skillnets model was facilitated through the financial support of our partner, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. As we move forward the renewal and updating of the Skillnets mandate will be crucial to the future work of the Board and management of Skillnets. Finally, the Board of Skillnets wishes to recognise the accomplishments of all of our networks, their member companies and their contribution to making Skillnets the success story that it is.

Domhnall MacDomhnaill
Chairperson
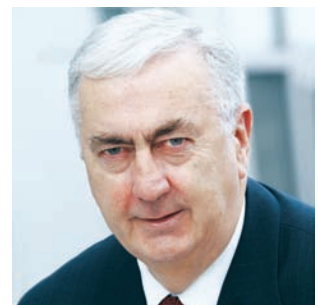
CEO's Introduction

It is with great pleasure that I introduce our 2008 Annual report. 2008 was a very challenging year for the organisation with sweeping changes in Ireland and internationally. At the start of 2008 we welcomed 123 training networks to the Training Networks Programme (TNP) 2008 – 2009. This programme saw a significant increase in funding translate into a widening of the range and diversity of our network structure. The year opened with numerous network launches throughout the country, many launched by Ministerial representatives.

The first quarter saw the remainder of the projects in the Accel Programme draw to a close with over 9,000 member companies and 29,310 employees benefiting from the programme which commenced in 2006. A final evaluation report was published in August and was formally launched by Minister of State for Life-long Learning Sean Haughey.

The Skillnets National Conference *Real Skills, Real People, Real Business, Learning our Way to Success: The Skillnets Perspective* was held in the Croke Park Conference Centre on Wednesday, 7th May. Launched by Mr. Billy Kelleher T.D., Minister for Labour Affairs the event attracted over 300 delegates. The conference theme reflected the core work of Skillnets and brought together networks and their member companies across regions and sectors, to share their experiences in the continuous need to upskill workers.

Skillnets Programme Support Managers (PSMs) continued to run a series of Professional Development Programme (PDP) events for all network managers. In addition, twenty four network managers completed the CPD (Continuing Professional Development) Diploma in Managing Business Networks certified to Level 6 from the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT).
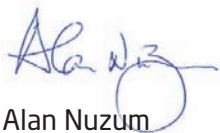
On a strategic level great strides were made in the areas of certification, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Low Basic Skills (LBS) and Impact Measurement. A number of groups and partnerships examining these areas were developed and extended throughout 2008. Work also began in 2008 for Skillnets Ltd. to achieve the Excellence Through People (ETP) Standard Certification as part of developing our organisational capacity. The ETP framework resulted in the implementation of a number of initiatives and following pre-assessment in December, Skillnets was ready to qualify for the ETP Standard Certification[1]. In further developing our organisational capacity staff completed training in various training courses to complement skills relative to their work.

Throughout the year, Skillnets participated in, and were represented on, many national bodies, committees and advisory groups, including the following: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Upskilling Committee; Management Development Council; Expert Group on Future Skills Needs; FETAC Standards Advisory Group and the National Standards Authority of Ireland.

By the third quarter of the year the economic climate had begun to change dramatically with the result of reductions to our funding levels. Networks in turn had to respond quickly, stretching resources further and responding to the types of training now in demand by member companies. They did this with drive and creativity, actively supported by the Programme Operations team. The positive result of these changing circumstances was a reflection of the strength of the Skillnets model's ability to adapt to change and keep our upskilling programme relevant to Irish industry. All of this has been achieved by maintaining a strong focus on efficiency. For example, the average cost of €130 per training day delivered an administration cost of c.10% for Skillnets Ltd.'s central support services demonstrates that the Skillnets model is capable of delivering quality support to enterprise through optimum use of public funds.

Facing uncertain times for all areas of the economy will continue to be a challenge for the future but I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the leadership and encouragement of our Chairman and Board of Directors who have been unflinching in their support of the organisation. I would also like to thank the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, all of our staff, network managers, contracting organisations and member companies for their hard work and belief in the Skillnets model.

Skillnets speciality in enterprise-led training and our strong track record of delivering success and value for money to the economy give me great optimism for the future.

Alan Nuzum
Chief Executive Officer

1 Skillnets qualified for Excellence Through People Standard Certification in February 2009

Skillnets Strategy

Skillnets is an enterprise-led body, which receives funds through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) from the National Training Fund (NTF), to support companies and their employees. Training networks allow enterprises to decide what training they need, as well as how, where and when it should be delivered, thus allowing staff to take part in relevant, flexible and cost-effective learning. Our role is to provide funding, advice and support to underpin the competitiveness of firms as well as increase the long-term career opportunities and employability of employees.

In 2005, the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment granted a further five year mandate to Skillnets to provide increased funding and support for enterprises to meet their training needs in the period 2005-2010. Since that time, the effectiveness of the Skillnets model has been further acknowledged through the successful launch of the Accel initiative 2006-2008 (up to €16 million) and additional resources from the National Training Fund.

Skillnets' strategy is to support companies from all sectors in the economy to engage in training, but does so exclusively through networks of companies under the Training Networks Programme (TNP). The network approach allows companies to achieve economies of scale, increased efficiency, lower costs and training that is more relevant to individual sectors or types of companies.

Four key building blocks form the basis of the Skillnets strategy and inform its programme of activity. Please see appendix 1 for a detailed description.

Skillnets' stakeholders include leading employer and employee representative bodies – Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), Chambers Ireland, Construction Industry Federation (CIF), Small Firms Association (SFA), Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).

TNP Training Networks Activity 2008

2008 saw the commencement of the Training Networks Programme (TNP) 2008-2009 whose annual budget had been raised to €26.5m for 2008. This extra funding broadened the programme application base and 123 training networks were approved. Changing circumstances in the last quarter of 2008 reduced these funding levels to a total of €26m for 2008.

- 123 training networks

- Total network expenditure €36.5m of which €25m invested by Skillnets and €11.5m cash invested by member companies

- 22,724 companies

- 56,126 people trained

- Over 200,000 training days delivered

TNP Training Network Activity 2008

The range and diversity of the network structure expanded both regionally and nationally with many networks providing innovative training in sectors as wide ranging as agriculture, design, technology, construction, food and drink, hospitality, manufacturing, space, radio, renewable energy, responsible tourism and childcare amongst others.

Skillnets, in line with its mandate, continued to focus much of its energy and support on facilitating networks to engage SMEs in the training process. SMEs accounted for 95% (≤250 employees) of the total number of companies funded by Skillnets with 63% of the total number being micro companies (<10 employees). The percentage of member companies with less than 50 employees continued its upward trend from 79% in 2006 and 81% the following year, to 85% in 2008.

13% of all Skillnets trainees were owner-managers, with 24% in the manager supervisory category, illustrating the importance of Skillnets training to management in the SME sector.

Figure 1:
Breakdown of Companies by Sector

Sectors of Companies in Skillnets Networks 2008
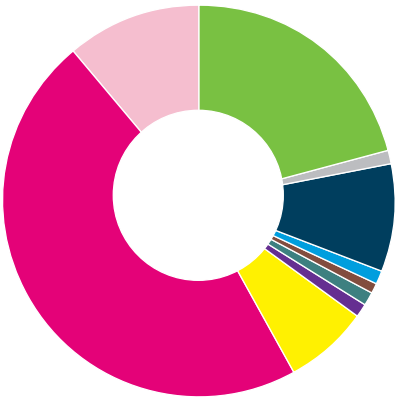
- Agriculture: **21%**
- Forestry & Fishing: **1%**
- Construction: **9%**
- Financial & Business: **1%**
- Health: **1%**
- Hotels & Restaurants: **1%**
- Transport, Storage & Communications: **1%**
- Other Services: **7%**
- Wholesale & Retail Trade: **47%**
- Other Production Industries: **11%**

Note: This is based on a 65% sample of member companies for which the data was available.

Figure 2:
Breakdown of Companies by Size

Member Company Size in Skillnets Networks 2008

Number of Employees

- 0-9: **63%**
- 10-49: **22%**
- 50-250: **10%**
- 250+: **5%**
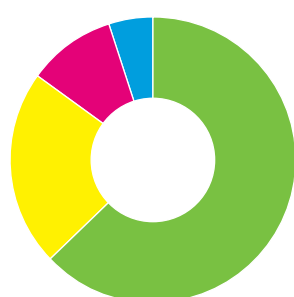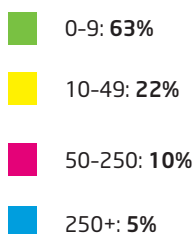
Participants continued to maintain similar levels to previous years in terms of gender balance.

Figure 3:
Breakdown of Trainees by Gender

Participant Profile Gender

Male: **56%**
Female: **44%**
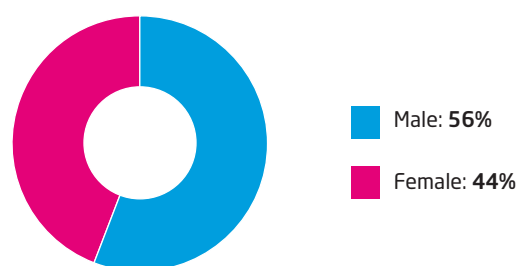
Participants in the 30-39 age group continued to represent the largest proportion of trainees, as with previous years.

Figure 4:
Breakdown of Trainees by Age

Participant Profile Age Range

Age	Percentage
<20	2.02%
20-29	24.75%
30-39	29.21%
40-49	17.01%
50-59	7.81%
>60	1.59%
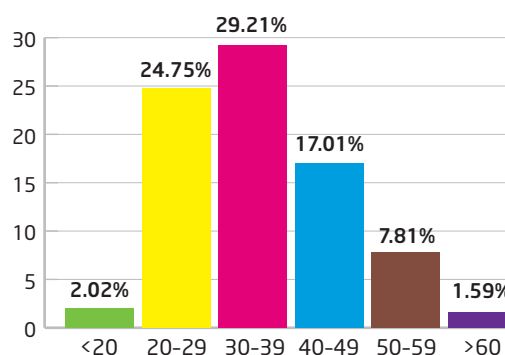
Note: This is based on an 82.4% sample of participants for which the data was available.

Figure 5:
Breakdown of Trainees by Occupational Category

Types of Employees in Skillnets Networks

- Non-manual: **4%**
- Semi-skilled: **12%**
- Owner Manager: **13%**
- Professional: **27%**
- Technician/Technical: **11%**
- Managerial/Supervisor: **24%**
- Skilled Manual: **9%**
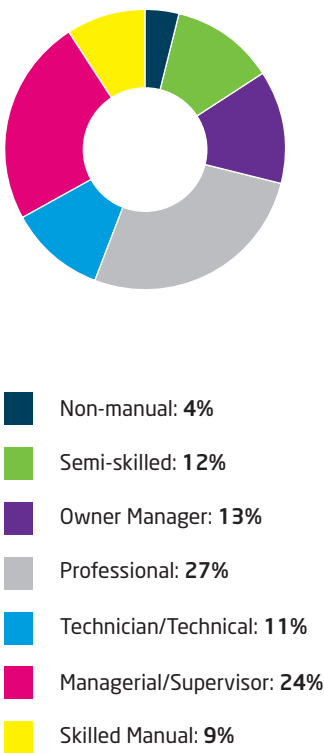
Owner manager and managerial/supervisor categories, a key target group, represent 37% of the trainees.

Figure 6:
Training Programmes Delivered

Extent of Customisation

- Existing (off the shelf) course: **39%**
- Existing course significantly customised for network: **12%**
- Existing course with some customisation for network: **28%**
- New course developed by network: **21%**
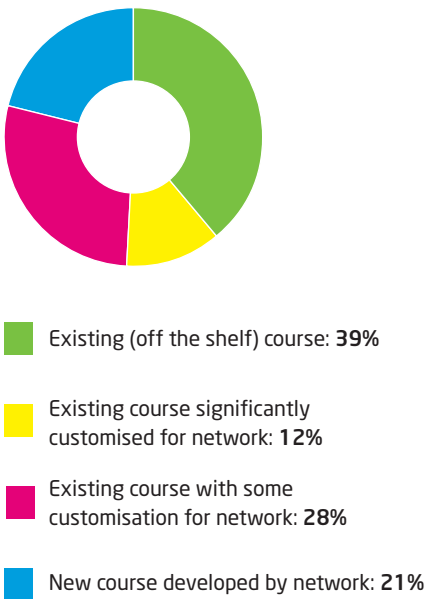
Existing (off the shelf) course	3,539	39%
Existing course significantly customised for network	1,101	12%
Existing course with some customisation for network	3,535	28%
New course developed by network	1,858	21%
Total Programmes	**10,033**	**100%**

In addition to 21% of programmes being fully developed by Skillnet networks, a further 40% were customised to varying extents to suit the particular trainees and companies. This supports the key focus of Skillnets networks being enterprise-led and being able to go beyond current provision via the network model.

Training Networks Responding to Challenging Times

Networks responded rapidly to the changing economic climate of 2008 and rose to the challenge, examining what enterprises could do to keep ahead in tough times. Their response was testament to the networks' ability to react to their member companies needs quickly and to develop and tailor training to suit those needs in a constantly changing environment. Below is a selection of some of the many examples of network seminars and events which took place in response to challenging times.

An innovative half day seminar entitled '*Training for the new economy*' was run by the **Training Providers Competency Skillnet**. Neil Leyden from Calico Media gave a brief overview of the development of the internet from an historic and socio-political viewpoint, its rapid evolution in the last decade, the rise of the iGeneration, the emerging digital divide between 'Digital Migrants and Digital Natives' and the impact this will have on training delivery in the future. Unique case studies were presented on training provision as well as an overview of new technologies available for the delivery of training and 'freeware' available online that enable trainers to find and distribute training content.

'*Surviving and Thriving through Turbulence*' was the theme of the **ICBE Business Excellence Skillnet** best practice event held in September in Limerick. This event examined how best practice in talent management, coaching and employee engagement could make a significant difference to an organisation's future. It used a series of interactive formats to present learnings.

Shannon Marine and Leisure Skillnet, together with Fáilte Ireland, recently hosted a HR seminar titled '*You and your staff in these challenging times…*' for businesses operating in the leisure and tourism sectors. The seminar looked at compliance, building and keeping a team, salary scales, complications and implications, and the range of supports available to the industry.

The **Irish Pest Control Skillnet** ran a seminar '*If you think training is expensive try ignorance*' at the Irish Pest Control Exhibition 2008. The theme of the conference reflected the realities and challenges facing the pest industry today in the midst of ever-changing local and global economies. The conference boasted eminent speakers from the industry.

Dave Flynn, Skillnets, *Damien Brennan*, Fáilte Ireland, *Maria Cullen*, Graphic HRM Ltd, *Alan Shanley*, Network Manager, Shannon Marine and Leisure Skillnet, *Joanna Howells-Roder*, BLJHR Solutions and *Aidan Pender*, Director Fáilte Ireland at the Shannon Marine and Leisure Skillnet Seminar.

TNP Member Company Satisfaction Survey Results 2008

Over 6,000 companies responded to the 2008 member company satisfaction survey, an increase of 3,500 from 2007. The following are some of the high level results achieved.

- 85% of companies stated that their training network delivered lower cost training than available alternatives

- 93% stated they would recommend becoming a member of a training network to other companies

- 46% of companies stated that their participation in their Skillnets training network had created new business partnerships, with 61% reporting key business contacts generated

- Companies stated that participation in their Skillnets training network had a positive impact on levels of customer satisfaction (78%) and employee morale (83%)

- 77% of companies stated that staff training had increased from their membership of a network with a further 82% stating that they could now avail of training that would not have been otherwise available

- Of companies that participated in networking events organised by their network,
  - 68% stated they were of benefit in generating ideas for development
  - 75% found that these events were of benefit in sharing learning opportunities
  - 77% kept up to date with market developments
  - 76% learned best business practice approaches for their sector

- 78% of companies stated that the Skillnets Training Networks Programme (TNP) was more flexible being enterprise-led and 82% felt the training provided was better suited to their business needs

Log on to **www.skillnets.ie** for more in-depth details on the survey.

Key Thematic Areas 2008

An overview of the key thematic areas of Certification, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Low Basic Skills (LBS), Evaluation, Impact Measurement and the All Island Networks Pilot Project are covered over the following pages. This overview highlights specific achievements at a strategic and network level in these areas.

Following on from this is a review of network activities including events (launches, seminars, conferences, networking), new technology deployment and awards in 2008.

Certification

In 1999, the Qualifications (Education & Training) Act was introduced and it has had a direct impact on further education and training in Ireland. The development of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) and the subsequent development of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) has been welcomed by bodies involved in the training arena in Ireland. The Training Networks Programme (TNP) for 2008 facilitated many networks to develop or attain certification for new and existing courses through the recognised NFQ awarding bodies.

Over 35% of courses under the Training Networks Programme (TNP) 2008 were independently certified, with 25% accredited by an NFQ awarding body, namely FETAC, HETAC and DIT. Where existing modules within the respective awarding bodies did not meet the specific needs of the Skillnet, the networks opted to develop their own modules through available, quality assured routes.

Figure 7:
Breakdown of Courses by Certification

Total Number of Courses

NFQ Accredited Courses: **25%** (2,065)

Other Accredited Certified Courses: **10%** (842)

Non Certified Courses: **65%** (5,465)
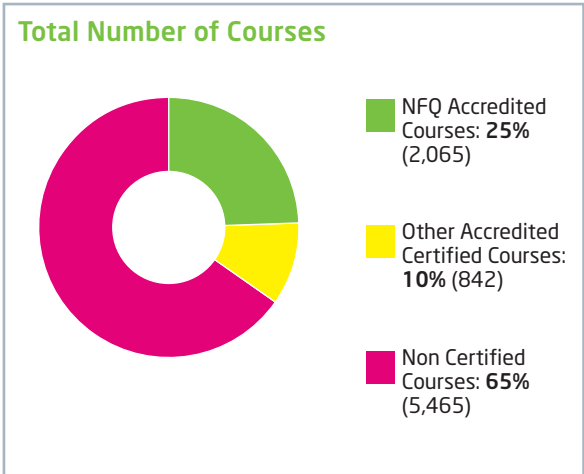
Figure 8:
Breakdown of Total Training Days by Certification

Total Training Days

NFQ Accredited Courses: **47%** (119,598)

Other Accredited Certified Courses: **12%** (31,866)

Non Certified Courses: **41%** (105,394)
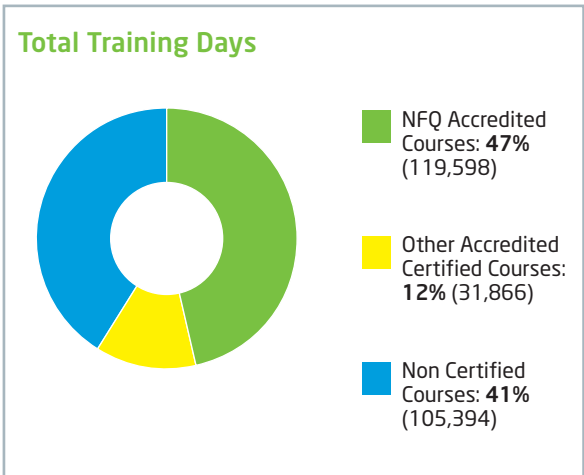
Certification

Developed by Skillnets, the Irish Institute of Training & Development (IITD), FÁS and University College Cork (UCC), Ireland's first Masters degree for professional trainers commenced in October 2008. The programme is available to all existing trainers or others who wish to further their qualifications in the field of learning and development consultancy. The MA Learning and Development Consultancy is a taught programme run over a two year period and provides education in organisational learning and development for those working as external or internal specialists. Consulting and business elements will allow graduates to diagnose, plan and measure the impact of training and development interventions on the whole of their business.

Network achievements included:

• MA/MSc in Digital Media

Developed in conjunction with Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) and the Accel programme, the MA/MSc in Digital Media seeks to provide the necessary skill base to promote the digital media industry in Ireland. The two-year, part-time course was developed in association with the **Digital Media Forum Accel Project and Skillnet** and has excellent links to a range of professional digital media companies in Ireland and the newly established Media Cube Incubation Centre. The course commenced in October 2008.

• Masters in Professional Design Practice

This course was developed by the **Design Ireland Skillnet** in conjunction with the School of Art, Design & Printing at the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). The programme commenced in October 2008, is a part-time Masters Degree offered at Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and awarded by Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). The overall aim of the MA in Professional Design Practice is to impart advanced, critically informed knowledge and understanding of design professional practices.

Neil Leyden, Network Manager, Digital Media Forum Skillnet, *Mary Hanafin*, T.D. Minister for Social & Family Affairs (formerly Minister for Education and Science) and *Alan Nuzum*, CEO, Skillnets launching the MA/MSc in Digital Media in Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT).

MA Learning & Development Consultancy Brochure Cover
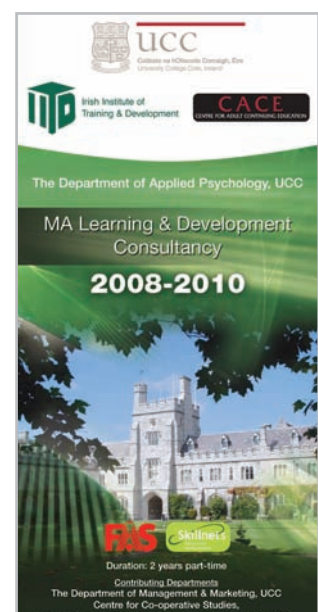
Certification

- **Certificate in Sustainable Design**
Developed by IT Carlow and the **Design Ireland Skillnet** the Certificate in Sustainable Design is an ECTS 10 credit Level 9 module. Primarily this course aims to upskill practicing design professionals in the area of Sustainable Design Practice.

- **First Polymer Training, SLM, Learning Waves** and **IASC Skillnets** all received their **Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) Quality Assurance Agreements** after they each submitted nine policies and 48 procedures to FETACs Quality Assurance programme.

- **ISIT Skillnet** was accredited as an approved centre of the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). The ILM is the UK's leading awarding body for management and leadership education, offering the widest and most flexible range of qualifications available.

In addition, the Certification Focus Group (CFG) was established in 2007 to develop a support system for networks already involved in the certification process and for other network managers hoping to implement certified training. The group advises network managers on the steps to becoming established as a certification centre for a number of certification bodies.

In 2008 the CFG represented Skillnets at the Consultative Forum held in relation to the implementation and impact of the NFQ and access, transfer and progression policies. It also contributed to the NQAI study on the same topic. The following networks were members of the group in 2008.

- **First Polymer Skillnet**
  Impact Measurement Skillnet
  ISIT Skillnet
  Leading Healthcare Providers Skillnet
  Private Healthcare Skillnet
  Renewable Energy Skillnet
  Retail Excellence Skillnet
  SLM Food & Drink Manufacturing Skillnet
  Trainer Provider Competency Skillnet

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Skillnets has encouraged networks to use innovative approaches to training and accreditation, such as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Skillnets developed strategic relationships with organisations active in the RPL arena, including the NQAI, DIT, FETAC and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT). It continues to support the work of the RPL Forum, which was established in 2006 as a collaborative project between South East Micro Skillnet, SLM Skillnet and Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet. The Forum ran a very successful RPL Conference in 2008.

An internal RPL Task Group was set up to further develop expertise in the area, keeping abreast of the latest developments and best practice. The group delivered an RPL taster session for networks in September with a view to developing a more comprehensive awareness raising session in 2009. A survey was issued to all networks at the end of 2008 to assess their degree of involvement in RPL, identify the key stakeholders and identify future RPL opportunities the networks would consider engaging with.

RPL in Action

IBEC Retail Skillnet developed 10 retail modules at FETAC Level 5, and 4 of these are accredited through RPL, namely: Retail Customer Service, Retail Selling Skills, Retail Communications and Retail Work Experience. To date, IBEC Retail Skillnet is one of only two networks approved by FETAC to award modules to participants using RPL. 10 staff from Brown Thomas Cork participated in a pilot between October and November 2008 based on the Retail Customer Service module. A significant part of the recognition process was based on work-based learning which takes place in the work environment. Each participant had between 12 and 30 years work experience. All participants successfully completed this module through RPL and were awarded distinctions.

Pictured at the RPL Skillnet Forum Conference in Carlow, *Phil O' Leary*, Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), *Deirdre Goggin*, (CIT), *Mick McHugh*, Skillnets, *Karma Farrell*, Network Manager, South East Micro Skillnet, *Ashling Ward*, Network Manager, Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet.

IBEC Retail Skillnet *Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment* Booklet
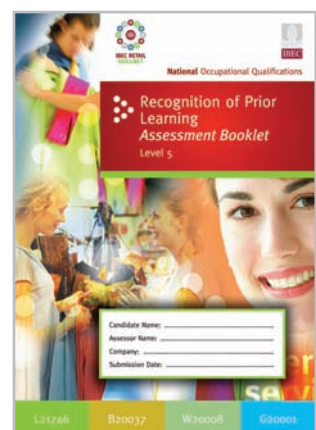
Low Basic Skills (LBS)

The Training Networks Programme (TNP) 2008/2009 call for proposals incentivised networks to increase the amount of training provided in the area of Low Basic Skills (LBS) as a result of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) report 'Tomorrow's Skills: Towards a National Skills Strategy'. The report noted the need for basic foundation skills such as literacy and maths.

Low Basic Skills (LBS) training for Skillnets trainees refers to any foundation or essential skills training programme that is certified and rated between Levels 1–5 under the NFQ, which leads to a higher qualification in the subject matter than is currently held by the trainee. The EGFSN report highlights the need for increased training for those in employment to Levels 4 and 5. Trainees participating in LBS programmes must achieve a higher qualification than they currently hold. Therefore the trainee's highest educational attainment to date, in any discipline, must be lower than or equal to Level 5 on the NFQ. 115,523 LBS training days were completed in 2008 which accounts for 45% of total training.
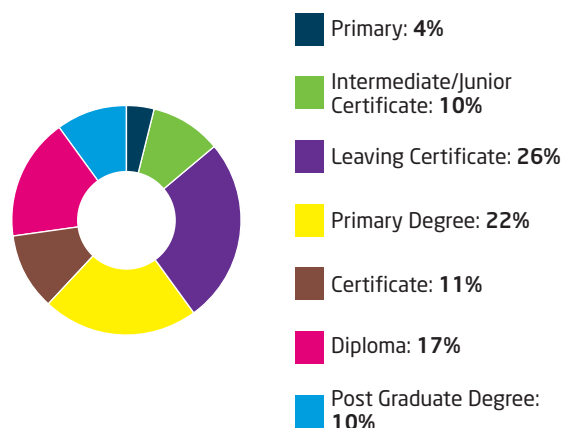
In addition, networks were encouraged to develop and roll out workplace based skills programmes in relevant skills such as communications, customer care, and sector specific areas. Programmes under this heading are required to be certified (or leading to certification where appropriate certification does not yet exist). The preferred certifying body would be FETAC who are the national awarding body for certifying any learning programmes on the NFQ Levels 1–5.

Skillnets and the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) established a working group to promote both increased awareness of and uptake in LBS training, particularly at the lower NFQ Levels. The group developed a statement of intent and designed a strategy to be implemented in 2009, which was formally endorsed nationwide by the combined Vocational Education Committees (VEC) CEO representative group. The plan involves increasing network awareness of VEC programmes, their status as FETAC Quality Assurance (QA) Centres and the availability of VEC training facilities. Skillnets and IVEA actively encouraged collaboration between networks and their local VECs.

As part of the LBS programme, Skillnets also worked in partnership with the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) to jointly support and evaluate networks that had LBS targets and help stimulate further LBS activity in the network community. A focus group of experienced trainers from diverse backgrounds was convened, which provided Skillnets and NALA with an insight into trainers' perceptions and experiences of the literacy and numeracy needs of their work-based learners.

Figure 9:
Breakdown of Educational Attainment Category

Education Levels Attained 2008 Prior to Training

- Primary: **4%**
- Intermediate/Junior Certificate: **10%**
- Leaving Certificate: **26%**
- Primary Degree: **22%**
- Certificate: **11%**
- Diploma: **17%**
- Post Graduate Degree: **10%**

The breakdown of trainees' qualification levels showed little change overall from 2007 with few discernible trends. The overall proportion of lower-skilled trainees (Levels 1-5) increased marginally from 38% last year to 40% in 2008, which can largely be attributed to the increased emphasis and new incentives provided for addressing the needs of the lower-skilled under the Training Networks Programme 2008–2009. However this growth occurred at the upper Levels 4-5, and the proportion of trainees at Levels 1–3 decreased from 18% in 2007 to 14%. This can be qualified in terms of a much higher volume of trainees overall in 2008, but it also underlines the relative difficulties associated with both the provision of and the access to training for this cohort of learners, as opposed to those with higher qualifications.

Evaluation

During 2008 Skillnets continued to place strong emphasis on the evaluation of all learning activity. This evaluation determines if training objectives were met, demonstrates and validates the benefits of the learning activity, helps to improve course design, the selection of training methods and providers, and to justify the costs.

Evaluation occurs at both an external and internal level. Each network is obliged to engage an independent external evaluator, whose remit is to provide an independent review of the network performance against their contracted targets and outputs, including the provision of an annual report. Skillnets provided networks with a guideline document for external evaluators, listing mandatory, strongly recommended and optional criteria.

Internal evaluation essentially concerned the specific evaluation of training and learning activity. In order to ensure a consistent approach, Skillnets continued to use the Kirkpatrick/Phillips evaluation model which involves evaluation of training at multiple levels.

Level 1 identifies reaction and satisfaction levels, while Level 2 measures the retention of learning. All networks are required to complete Level 1 & 2 evaluations for all learning activities. Level 3 measures the implementation of the learning in the workplace, and two-thirds of networks conducted Level 3 evaluations in 2008. Level 4 quantifies the business impact and results of learning activity, and 10% of networks carried out a Level 4 evaluation.

Skillnets also promotes evaluation at Level 5 using the Kirkpatrick/Phillips ROI (Return on Investment) methodology, the aim of which is to calculate and qualify the benefits of learning activity in monetary terms.

The support and monitoring services provided by the Skillnets Programme Operations team provided a key role in the internal evaluation process. All networks were obliged to submit quarterly reports throughout the year and an interim programme End of Year Report detailing their financial & activity performance, including the evaluation of training. This was monitored by the Programme Support Managers on an on-going basis to ensure the accuracy of data.
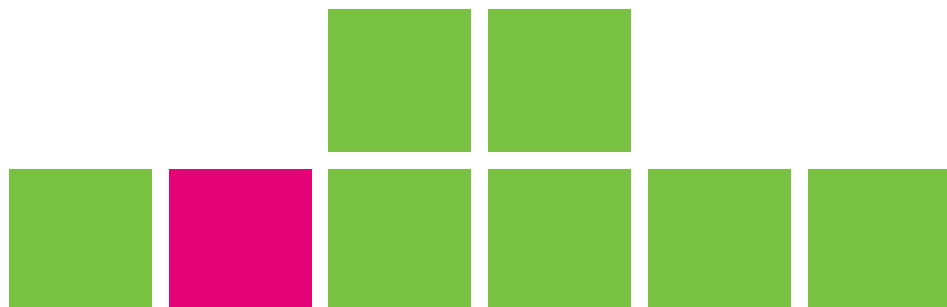
Impact Measurement

The Management Development Council (MDC) is a body appointed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment to advise government on supporting the development of world class management skills within Irish small to medium enterprises (SMEs). In November 2008 the MDC issued a report on Return on Investment (ROI) on Management Development Programmes (MDP) in SMEs. Skillnets supported this initiative through the completion of ten individual ROI case studies on SMEs that were members of their respective training networks. The ten network managers who were successful in the application process completed a two day ROI Foundation Certificate and had the opportunity to avail of mentoring support offered through the Impact Measurement Skillnet. Networks who took part in the project were:

- **ACIST Skillnet, Call Centre Skillnet, Galway Executive Skillnet, Irish Professional Photographers Skillnet, ISIT Skillnet, Kaizen Training Skillnet, Learning Waves Skillnet, LHP Skillnet, Print & Packaging Skillnet, Private Healthcare Skillnet.**

Skillnets and the Impact Measurement Skillnet were awarded the Best Practice Implementation Award by the Global ROI Institute. The award was presented at the 2008 Global ROI Conference held in the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire in October. The ROI Institute is the world centre of excellence on ROI research and its implementation in business training and development.

Skillnets has incorporated ROI methodology into its training programmes since 2004. To date over 150 practitioners have been certified in 85 companies at both Foundation and Diploma levels. The Best Practice Implementation Award recognises organisations or individuals for quantifiable results achieved through successful, enterprise wide implementation of the ROI methodology.

All Island Networks Pilot Project

Skillnets were partners with InterTradeIreland (ITI) in a pilot project to test the concept of training networks within the island of Ireland. In 2008, Skillnets facilitated the customisation of an ITI application "process" based on the Skillnets model. It was agreed that ITI would manage the initiative and that both organisations would jointly monitor the programme. The core objective of each successful network was to initiate effective collaboration between companies in a training context, and to get companies engaged in activity on an all island basis. Networks involved in the programme were Digital Media, Wireless, Software, First Polymer and SLM Manufacturing Skillnets. Digital Media, Wireless and Software Skillnets are now working through Momentum, the trade association representing Northern Ireland's Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) industry. First Polymer and the SLM Manufacturing Skillnets are building on established links with Northern Irish companies.

Patti Phillips, ROI Institute, *Samantha Plant*, Network Manager, Impact Measurement Skillnet and *Jack Phillips*, ROI Institute at the 2008 Global ROI Conference.

Additional Training Network Activity 2008

Networks were extremely active across a wide variety of complementary activities in 2008 including events (launches, seminars, conferences, networking) and new technology deployment. They embraced the technological age with many developing their own websites to promote the work of the network and many also provided on-line booking facilities for training. Other advances were in the production of blogs, DVDs, interactive training videos, e-seminars and on-line magazines.

In addition a number of training networks were recognised through a variety of awards.
Below are some examples of those awards.

The **Irish Institute of Training and Development (IITD) National Training Awards** recognises organisations which demonstrate best practice and an ongoing commitment to training and developing their staff. The 2008 Awards took place at Killashee House Hotel, Naas, on February 22nd 2008 with three Skillnets networks receiving awards in the Networks and Groups category.

The **Construction Skillnet** received the *sector winner* award for its strategic approach to delivering the skills required in what is a very fluid and challenging sector. **Design Ireland Skillnet** received an *outstanding achievement award* for its achievements in increasing the levels of participants trained in member companies by 30%. **Space Industry Skillnet** received an *outstanding achievement award* for its achievements in delivering international expertise at local level to its member companies and also received recognition as the only space industry training network in Europe.

The annual **Information Technology Association of Galway (ITAG) Awards** represent ITAG's annual celebration of vitality and innovation in the West of Ireland's fast-growing technology community. Skillnets received an award from the ITAG Governing Board for their contribution to the ICT sector in Galway. Over 3000 employees from member companies have been trained across technical and professional development streams. The technical programmes being delivered are highly specialized, and before the existence of the network employees needed to travel to Dublin or further afield to avail of this training.

'James Joyce', Alan Nuzum, CEO, Skillnets and MEI CEO, *Adrian Cummins* – taking a stroll in Merrion Square during the official launch of the English Language Skillnet.

Niall O'Cleirigh, Macalla Software & Chairman of Software Skillnet, An Tánaiste *Mary Coughlan* T.D. and *Shane Dempsey,* Irish Software Association at the annual review of the Software Skillnet.

Minister for Life-long Learning *Sean Haughey* T.D., *Alan Hore,* Director of CITA, *Suzanne Purcell,* Network Manager and *Alan Nuzum,* CEO Skillnets at the launch of the CITA Skillnet in the Guinness Storehouse.

Terri Moloney, Laing O'Rourke Ireland, *Lorraine Mannion,* Network Manager and *Tracy Latham,* Network Assistant Construction Skillnet, sector winner at the IITD National Training Awards.

Overview of Key Departments

An overview of the key departments –
Programme Operations, Communications and Finance & Services are
detailed on the following pages.

Programme Operations

Programme Operations Team

The Programme Operations team actively managed the 123 training networks through its Programme Support Manager (PSM) and administration support functions. The team liaise on an ongoing basis with networks, providing management support and advice as well as monitoring of performance against an agreed set of training, networking and financial targets. Skillnets on-line data management system, SAM, was upgraded to facilitate the collection of networks' financial, training activity and evaluation information. This data is in turn used by Skillnets to analyse and evaluate individual network performance as well as overall programme monitoring and analysis/reporting.

The Programme Operations team also managed Skillnets special project functions in a variety of areas such as Certification, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Low Basic Skills (LBS) and Return On Investment (ROI). A number of groups and partnerships examining these areas were developed and extended throughout 2008.

At the end of 2008, 123 network managers and 97 network promoters completed web surveys examining performance and service related aspects of their relationship with Skillnets. Specific to the Programme Operations team 90% of network managers and 89% of promoters declared that the Training Networks Programme met most/all and exceeded expectations while 94% of network managers and 93% of promoters declared that their PSM met most/all or exceeded their expectations.
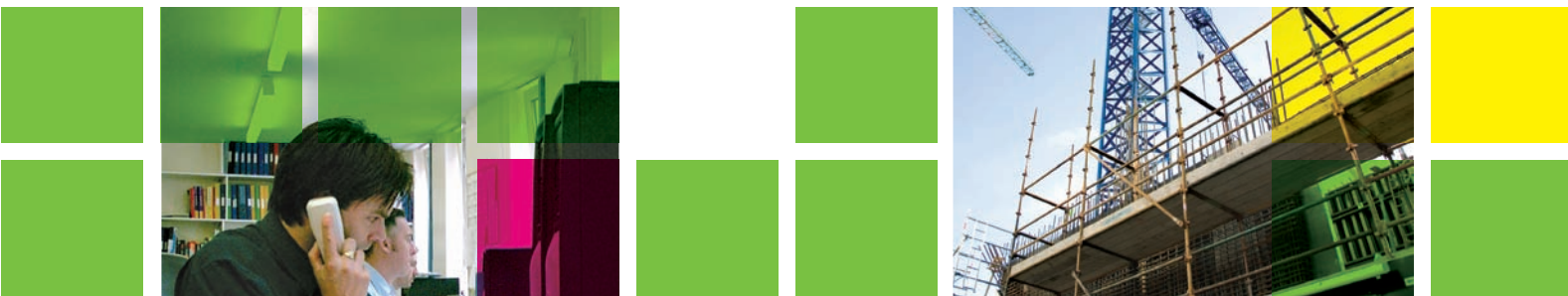
Programme Operations Team

Network Manager Professional Development Programme (PDP)

Skillnets continued to deliver a Professional Development Programme (PDP) for network managers of the Training Networks Programme in 2008. This programme is designed to:

- Equip managers with the skills, competencies and knowledge to manage the role effectively

- Share best-practice across networks and foster collaboration among networks

- Support network managers, often working in isolation, who can benefit from networking opportunities

- Introduce managers to new concepts and practices on learning networks

The PDP was delivered via interactive seminars to three regional cluster groups. Seminars were organised in a variety of combinations; running individual events within each region, sometimes combining two cluster groups together, or even on occasion bringing all three clusters together for a national seminar. In addition to inputs from the Skillnets team and relevant experts, the experiences of networks is utilised by presentations of case studies of successful projects or ways of managing the network. Supports run in 2008 under the PDP included cluster group seminars, masterclasses, a pilot mentoring programme and the tailored Skillnets Activity Management (SAM) training sessions. Each seminar and cluster group event is evaluated by the participants at the end of each event. A key performance indicator was to meet or exceed the satisfaction levels of 2007 which was on average 4/5. During 2008 this was exceeded with satisfaction levels averaging at 4.15/5 for the PDP events.

Skillnets CPD Diploma in Managing Business Networks 2008

In 2006, Skillnets was successful in certifying the programme above with DIT as the **Diploma in Managing Business Networks** which is certified at FETAC Level 6 on the NFQ. Twenty four network managers graduated with Diplomas from the programme in 2008.

The core modules of the programme are:

- Introduction to Networks

- Business Finance

- Measurement and Benchmarking

- Managing and Sustaining Networks

- Training for Networks

A key performance indicator to meet or exceed the satisfaction levels of 2007 which was on average 4/5 satisfaction for the CPD Diploma modules was exceeded at 4.24/5 for 2008.

2008 CPD Diploma Graduates

Communications

The role of the communications department is to promote and manage the Skillnets brand and generate awareness across key publics for the Training Networks Programme (TNP).

It is also tasked with maintaining key programme information and data and producing regular updates and formal reports to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The department also acts as an external marketing and promotional resource for all training networks, incorporating a pre-clearance system for all network publications, marketing materials and publicity documents. The Skillnets national biennial conference was also managed by the team.

With the commencement of the TNP 2008–2009 over 60 official launches took place throughout the country. The communications department provided support to the networks with press releases, as well as briefing notes and speeches for any ministerial representatives where applicable.

Skillnets maintained an active media presence throughout 2008 with publication achieved in national and regional press for a range of corporate and network related stories. Brand awareness levels increased to 49% in 2008, a 5% rise on the previous year with over 6 in 10 associating Skillnets with providing a valuable quality service and life-long learning. A very high level, almost 7 in 10, stated that Skillnets supports the development of workplace skills. In 2007 there was a drop in those stating training as being very important but this recovered in 2008 with over 8 in 10 stating its importance.

Results from the 2008 surveys with network managers and promoters concluded that 84.6% of network managers and 85% of promoters felt that the support from the communications team met most/all or exceeded their expectations.

Skillnets maintains an active web presence and network training information portal through its site www.skillnets.ie. In 2008 substantial revisions to the site included a content optimisation programme and an upgraded network search facility. Work commenced on an intranet facility in late 2008.

Skillnets Chairman *Domhnall MacDomhnaill and Billy Kelleher* T.D. Minister for Trade and Commerce (formerly Minister for Labour Affairs).

2008 Publications

Skillnets launched a number of publications in 2008, all of which are available on the Skillnets website.

- **The Training Networks Programme (TNP) Summary Report 2006-2007**
  A comprehensive report detailing the achievements of the TNP 06-07 programme.
- **Skillnets Case Studies 2006-2007**
  Collected business case histories from Skillnets networks detailing the impact of the programme on individual businesses or market sectors.
- **The Skillnets Experience - Measuring the Impact of Training for the Low Skilled**
  A report on the impact of the Training Networks Programme on Low Basic Skills training in Ireland.
- **Skillnets Network Directory 2008 - 2009**
  A full listing of all 123 Skillnets networks participating in the TNP 08-09. Contact details of network managers, network promoters and individual network course syllabuses are given.
- **Skillnets National Conference 2008: Real Skills, Real People, Real Business**
  Collected presentations and publications from the 2008 conference.
- **Accel Programme Summary Report 2006-2008**
  The final evaluation report for the Accel programme which was completed at the end of 2008.
- **Skillnets News**
  A quarterly publication, Skillnets News is a key document detailing the progress of networks throughout the programme. It also kept networks appraised of major marketplace issues and the ongoing activities of Skillnets.

Market Research

Skillnets commissioned four market research reports in 2008.

- **Brand Awareness Survey:**
  A sample of 301 SMEs, modelled on a natural nationwide distribution, was surveyed by phone on awareness of the parent Skillnets brand and perceptions of the brand and its related training activities.

- **Network Manager & Network Promoter Surveys:**
  123 network managers and 97 network promoters completed web surveys examining performance and service related aspects of their relationship with Skillnets.

- **Member Company Satisfaction Survey:**
  Over 6,000 companies drawn from the membership of all 123 networks were canvassed on attitudes to the TNP, training and networking issues and general satisfaction with the Skillnets model.
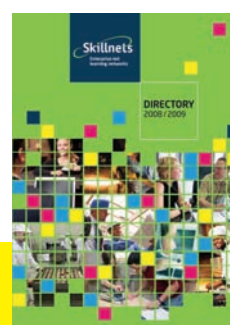
Finance and Services

The Finance and Services team provides management and financial support for both Skillnets and the training network community and provides services to support the organisation's needs.

The Finance and Services team helped Skillnets increase its organisational capacity in 2008 and enabled it to accommodate the increase in scale of the Training Networks Programme.

Organisation changes, additional staff and a number of IT initiatives formed part of this increase in organisational capacity. The company also successfully relocated to new offices mid-year.

Skillnets is subject to National Procurement Policy and EU Procurement Directives and in 2008 Skillnets looked to enhance its procurement capability to ensure best value for money and legislative compliance. Staff members were trained and up-skilled to best practice standards.

Excellence Through People (ETP), the national human resource management standard was the focus of much attention during the year. This prompted the adoption of a number of initiatives aimed at enhancing the organisation's performance, recognising that all of Skillnets staff members contribute to achieving continued success.

Internal auditors were appointed by Skillnets to audit and provide assurance that the procedures and control over the TNP 2006/7 close-down process operated effectively, efficiently and in accordance with Skillnets procedures. The internal auditors also examined the extent to which earlier recommendations made had been implemented. Overall it was found that Skillnets has good checks and control procedures over its close down process and a number of improvements were recommended. The company's own continuous improvement process took the opportunity to adopt these recommendations in its close-down process for the 2008 year.

The team also successfully managed the contracting process for 123 new networks of the TNP 2008/9.

Results from the 2008 surveys with network managers and promoters concluded that 92% of network managers and 92% of promoters felt that the support from the finance support function met most/all or exceeded their expectations and 94% of network managers and 95% of promoters felt that the administration function met most/all or exceeded their expectations.

Accel Programme 2006-2008

In 2006 Skillnets was appointed as the Training Support Unit for the Accel Programme, following a competitive tendering process. Over 9,000 companies participated in the Accel Programme, with 29,310 workers receiving skills training. The programme received EU financial support of €16.8 million through the European Social Fund, with companies providing a further €7 million in cash and wage contributions. Skills training under the Accel Programme was delivered through 55 training networks.

The programme was completed in 2008, publishing its final evaluation report in August. The report cited a high level of satisfaction among trainees with 90% confirming their satisfaction with both the quality and relevance of the training they received. Over 50% of Accel training included accreditation which trainees saw as a major benefit. The programme delivered 131,631 training days. The end of programme report was formally launched by Minister of State for Life-long Learning Sean Haughey.

Accel Programme Final Evaluation 2006-2008 Report available to download at –
http://www.skillnets.com/skillnets/ resources/publications.html

Domhnall MacDomhnaill, Chairman, Skillnets, Minister for Life-long Learning, *Sean Haughey* and *Diane Dignam*, Senior Programme Manager, Skillnets.

accel
accelerating
in-company skills

Financial Information
& Statement of Results

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Directors' Report and Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 December 2008

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Directors and Other Information

Board of Directors

Domhnall MacDomhnaill   (Chairman)
Sean Heading
Terry Hobdell
Nuala Keher
Henry Murdoch
Sexton Cahill
Niall Saul
Mairéad Divilly
Brendan McGinty
Noelle O'Connell
Peter Rigney
Ian Talbot
John McDermott

Secretary

Alan Nuzum

Registered Office

5th Floor,
Q House
76 Furze Road
Sandyford
Dublin 18

Registered Number: 298694

Auditors

PricewaterhouseCoopers
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
One Spencer Dock
North Wall Quay
Dublin 1

Solicitors

O'Donnell Sweeney Eversheds
1 Earlsfort Centre
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2

Landwell Solicitors
One Spencer Dock
North Wall Quay
Dublin 1

Bankers

Bank of Ireland
Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Directors' Report

The directors submit their report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2008.

Directors' responsibilities
Irish company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that year. In preparing the financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting standards generally accepted in Ireland and comply with the Irish Companies Acts, 1963 to 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Proper books
The measures taken by the directors to secure compliance with the company's obligation to keep proper books of account are the use of appropriate systems and procedures and employment of competent persons. The books of account are kept at 5th Floor, Q House, 76 Furze Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18.

Principal activities
The company was incorporated on 17 December 1998. The company was formed to provide grants for the promotion, formation and successful operation of enterprise-led training networks under the *Training Networks Programme*. This is funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

Results for the year	€
Surplus for the financial year amounted to:	Nil

Fair review of development and performance of the business and principal risks and uncertainties
The funding programme from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment continues up to 31 December 2010. The company has contracted with a number of promoter organisations to fund training networks. This commitment has been made contingent upon the funds being made available to the company by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

A subsidiary company, Skillnets Services Limited, formed in 2005, provides professional services to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

Directors
The names of the persons who were directors or secretary at any time during the year ended 31 December 2008 are set out below. Except where indicated, they served for the entire year.

Domhnall MacDomhnaill (Chairman)
Sean Heading
Terry Hobdell
Nuala Keher
Henry Murdoch
Sexton Cahill
Peter Rigney
Niall Saul
Mairéad Divilly
John Dunne *Resigned 10 September 2008*
Brendan McGinty
John Daly *Resigned 31 March 2008*
Noelle O'Connell *Appointed 1 January 2008*
Ian Talbot *Appointed 11 September 2008*
John McDermott *Appointed 11 December 2008*

Skillnets Limited
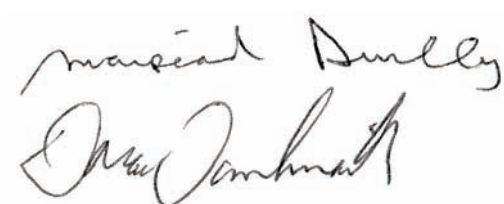(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Directors' Report – continued

Secretary
Alan Nuzum

Auditors
The auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers, will be
re-appointed in accordance with Section 160(2) of the
Companies Act, 1963.

On behalf of the board

Mairéad Divilly
Domhnall MacDomhnaill

26 March 2009

Independent Auditors' Report

Independent auditors' report to the shareholders of Skillnets Limited (A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

We have audited the financial statements on pages 36 to 45. The financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out in the statement of accounting policies on page 36.

Respective responsibilities of directors and auditors

The directors' responsibilities for preparing the directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable Irish law and accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and published by The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland) are set out in the statement of directors' responsibilities on page 32.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). This report, including the opinion, has been prepared for and only for the company's members as a body in accordance with Section 193 of the Companies Act 1990 and for no other purpose. We do not, in giving this opinion, accept or assume responsibility for any other purpose or to any other person to whom this report is shown or into whose hands it may come save where expressly agreed by our prior consent in writing.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, and properly prepared in accordance with Irish statute comprising the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2006. We state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit and whether the financial statements are in agreement with the books of account. We also report to you our opinion as to:

- whether the company has kept proper books of account; and
- whether the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements.

We also report to you if, in our opinion, information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and transactions is not disclosed, and, where practicable, include such information in our report.

We read the directors' report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, of the state of the company's affairs at 31 December 2008 and of its result and cash flow for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2006.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the company. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

Independent Auditors' Report – continued
Independent auditors' report to the shareholders of Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

In our opinion the information given in the directors'
report on pages 32 to 33 is consistent with the
financial statements.

PricewaterhouseCoopers

PricewaterhouseCoopers
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
Dublin

19 May 2009

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Accounting Policies

The significant accounting policies adopted by the company are as follows:

Basis of preparation
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standards generally accepted in Ireland and Irish statute comprising the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2006. Accounting Standards generally accepted in Ireland in preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view are those published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and issued by the Accounting Standards Board.

Accounting convention
The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in Ireland and are expressed in Euro (€).

Department funding
Funding from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment is received to meet both revenue and minor capital expenditure. This is credited to deferred income on receipt and is transferred to income and expenditure account to match expenditure as it is incurred.

Programme costs
Programme costs represent programme support and grant payments made to fund the operations of projects on behalf of the company for the formation and successful operation of enterprise-led networks.

Deferred taxation
Deferred tax is provided for all timing differences that have originated but not reversed at the balance sheet date where transactions or events that result in an obligation to pay more tax in the future or a right to pay less tax in the future have occurred at the balance sheet date.

Timing differences are temporary differences between profits as computed for tax purposes and profits as stated in the financial statements which arise because certain items of income and expenditure in the financial statements are dealt with in different years for tax purposes.

Deferred tax is measured at the tax rates that are expected to apply in the years in which the timing differences are expected to reverse, based on tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the balance sheet date. Deferred tax is not discounted.

Tangible assets
Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is charged for leasehold improvements over the term of the lease obligation. Depreciation is charged for all other fixed assets at a rate of 33% using the straight line method.
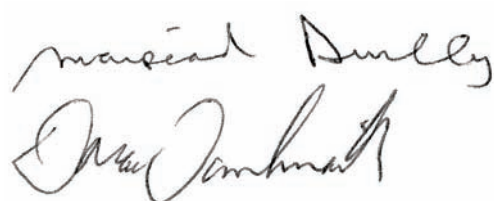
Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Income and Expenditure Account
Year Ended 31 December 2008

	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Income	2	26,117,320	13,586,178
Programme costs		(23,614,557)	(11,779,312)
Gross surplus		2,502,763	1,806,866
Administration costs		(2,562,254)	(1,841,968)
Interest income		79,320	49,903
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	3	19,829	14,801
Taxation	4	(19,829)	(14,801)
Surplus for the financial year		-	-

Income and expenditure arose solely from continuing operations. There were no recognised gains or losses other than those dealt with in the Income and Expenditure account.

On behalf of the board
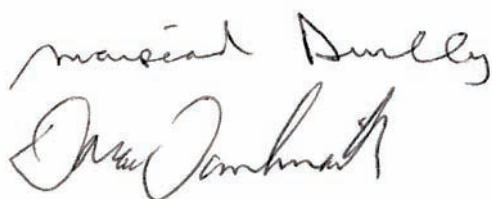
Mairéad Divilly
Domhnall MacDomhnaill

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Balance Sheet
31 December 2008

	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Fixed assets			
Financial assets	5	1	1
Tangible assets	6	170,413	88,673
		170,414	88,674
Current assets			
Debtors	7	84,802	97,729
Cash at bank and in hand		115,837	242,302
		200,639	340,031
Creditors - Amounts falling due within one year	8 (a)	(79,511)	(85,021)
Net current assets		121,128	255,010
Total assets less current liabilities		291,542	343,684
Creditors - amounts falling due after more than 1 year	8 (b)	(38,178)	–
Deferred income	9	(253,364)	(343,684)
		–	–
Capital and reserves			
Members' funds	13	–	–
		–	–

On behalf of the board

Mairéad Divilly
Domhnall MacDomhnaill

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Cash Flow Statement
Year Ended 31 December 2008

	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
Cash inflow from operating activities	10	53,701	14,150
Returns on investments and servicing of finance	11	79,320	49,903
Capital expenditure and financial investment	11	(229,365)	(55,454)
Taxation paid		(30,121)	(5,577)
(Decrease)/increase in cash	12	(126,465)	3,022

Reconciliation of Net Cash Flow to Movement in Net Funds
Year Ended 31 December 2008

	Notes	2008 €	2007 €
(Decrease)/increase in cash in the year		(126,465)	3,022
Net funds at 1 January		242,302	239,280
Net funds at 31 December	12	115,837	242,302

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Notes to the Financial Statements

1   Basis of accounting

In the year ended 31 December 2008, the company recorded a surplus of €nil (2007: €nil). The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2   Income

This represents amounts received from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in accordance with the accounting policy set out on page 36.

3   Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation

	2008 €	2007 €
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation has been arrived at after charging:		
Staff costs		
– wages and salaries	1,160,163	887,628
– Social welfare costs	112,609	85,341
	1,272,772	972,969
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	1,847	–
Auditors' remuneration	10,000	7,150
Depreciation	145,778	110,947

4   Taxation

	2008 €	2007 €
Current tax:		
Irish corporation tax on passive income	28,627	6,003
Adjustments in respect of prior years	–	–
Current tax charge for the year	28,627	6,003
Deferred tax:		
Origination and reversal of timing differences	(8,798)	8,798
Deferred tax (credit)/charge for the year	(8,798)	8,798
Total tax charge for the year	19,829	14,801

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Notes to the Financial Statements – continued

4　Taxation – continued

The current tax charge for the year is different to the current charge that would result from applying the standard rate of Irish corporation tax to surplus on ordinary activities. The differences are explained below:

	2008 €	2007 €
Surplus on ordinary activities before tax	19,829	14,801
Surplus on ordinary activities multiplied by the standard rate of Irish corporation tax for the year of 12.5% (2007: 12.5%)	2,479	1,850
Effects of:		
Loss relief not available	7,435	1,152
Timing differences on deposit interest received	8,798	–
Passive income at higher tax rate	9,915	3,001
Current tax charge for the year	28,627	6,003

There are no known factors which may affect future tax charges.

It has been agreed with the Revenue Commissioners that Skillnets Limited is not subject to corporation tax on its principal activities but is subject to corporation tax on its other income including deposit interest income.

5　Financial assets

Financial assets represent a 100% holding in its subsidiary Skillnets Services Limited, a company incorporated in Ireland on 5 July 2005. Skillnets Services Limited provides professional services for the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and in the year ended 31 December 2008 recorded a profit of €13,000 and at 31 December 2008 had net assets of €185,671.

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Notes to the Financial Statements – continued

6	**Fixed assets**	Leasehold improvements €	Office equipment €	Fixtures and fittings €	Computers €	Total €
	Cost					
	At 1 January 2008	61,436	39,709	36,312	320,631	458,088
	Additions	-	1,004	91,704	136,676	229,384
	Intercompany transfer	-	-	-	8,819	8,819
	Disposals	(61,436)	(28,249)	(7,009)	-	(96,694)
	At 31 December 2008	-	12,464	121,007	466,126	599,597
	Accumulated depreciation					
	At 1 January 2008	61,436	38,090	26,969	242,920	369,415
	Disposals	(61,436)	(28,249)	(5,143)	-	(94,828)
	Intercompany transfer	-	-	-	8,819	8,819
	Charge for the year	-	1,144	35,646	108,988	145,778
	At 31 December 2008	-	10,985	57,472	360,727	429,184
	Net book values					
	At 31 December 2007	-	1,619	9,343	77,711	88,673
	At 31 December 2008	-	1,479	63,535	105,399	170,413

Included above are the following amounts in respect of furniture and fittings held under finance leases:

	2008 €	2007 €
Net book amount at 31 December	47,904	-
Depreciation charge for the year	23,952	-

7	**Debtors**	2008 €	2007 €
	Amounts due from Skillnets Services Limited	54,483	32,297
	Prepayments and other debtors	30,023	65,432
	Corporation tax	296	-
		84,802	97,729

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Notes to the Financial Statements – continued

8	(a) Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year	2008 €	2007 €
	Finance lease	22,952	–
	Accruals	52,857	74,160
	VAT and PAYE/PRSI	3,702	1,250
	Corporation tax	–	813
	Deferred tax	–	8,798
		79,511	85,021

	(b) Creditors – amounts falling due after more than one year	2008 €	2007 €
	Finance lease	38,178	–

	(c) Finance leases – maturity and security	2008 €	2007 €
	Future minimum payments under finance leases are as follows:		
	In one year or less	27,036	–
	In more than one year, but not more than five years	40,555	–
	In more than five years	–	–
	Total gross payments	67,591	–
	Less finance charges included above	(6,461)	–
		61,130	–

The lease finances certain furniture and fittings which remains in the legal ownership of the lessor.

9	Deferred income	2008 €	2007 €
	Opening balance	343,684	429,862
	Received during year	26,027,000	13,500,000
	Credited to income and expenditure account	(26,117,320)	(13,586,178)
	Deferred at 31 December	253,364	343,684

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Notes to the Financial Statements – continued

10	Reconciliation of operating (deficit) to operating cash flow	2008 €	2007 €
	Operating (deficit) before interest income	(59,491)	(35,102)
	Depreciation	145,778	110,947
	Decrease/(increase) in debtors and prepayments	13,609	(347)
	Decrease in creditors	(48,042)	(61,348)
	Loss on disposal of fixed assets	1,847	–
	Net cash inflow from operating activities	53,701	14,150

11	Analysis of cash flows for headings netted in the cash flow statement	2008 €	2007 €
	Returns on investment and servicing of finance		
	Interest received	79,320	49,903
	Capital expenditure and financial investment		
	Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(229,384)	(55,454)
	Sale of tangible fixed assets	19	–
	Net cash outflow for capital expenditure and financial investment	(229,365)	(55,454)

12	Analysis of net funds	At 31 December 2007 €	Cash flow €	At 31 December 2008 €
	Cash at hand and in bank	242,302	(126,465)	115,837
		242,302	(126,465)	115,837

13 Membership

The company is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. Every member is liable for the debts and liabilities of the company in the event of a winding up, for such amount as may be required but not exceeding €1 each. The number of members at 31 December 2008 was 13 (2007: 12), being each of the directors.

Skillnets Limited and its subsidiary Skillnets Services Limited combined meet the size criteria for a small sized group and Skillnets Limited is therefore exempt from the requirements to prepare consolidated financial statements by virtue of Regulation 7 of the European Communities (Companies: Group Accounts) Regulations 1992.

14 Finance commitments

The company has an annual commitment of €292,203 on the occupational lease of the premises in Sandyford. The lease is for 9 years and 11 months with a break clause on the 5th anniversary of the commencement date 14th July 2008.

Skillnets Limited
(A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Notes to the Financial Statements – continued

15	Directors' remuneration	2008 €	2007 €
	Fees	41,348	52,500
	Other emoluments	-	-
		41,348	52,500

In addition, a number of directors waived their fee and instead opted to have a similar amount paid to their respective employer organisations. During the year, payments of €35,000 (2007: €44,539) were made for such amounts. Domhnall Mac Domhnaill and Sexton Cahill waived a portion of their fees for the year.

Name		Payment details €
Domhnall Mac Domhnaill		3,174
Terry Hobdell		7,000
Sexton Cahill		3,174
Niall Saul		7,000
Mairéad Divilly		7,000
Brendan McGinty		7,000
Henry Murdoch		7,000
		41,348
Nuala Keher	to Lionra	7,000
Noelle O'Connell	to Construction Industry Federation	7,000
Ian Talbot/John Dunne	to Chambers Ireland	7,000
Peter Rigney	to Irish Congress of Trade Unions	7,000
Sean Heading	to Education Training Organisational Services (ETOS)	7,000
		35,000

16	Employees	2008	2007
	The number of full time equivalent persons employed by the company during the year was as follows:	21	14

17 Comparative amounts

Some prior year comparative amounts have been reclassified on a basis consistent with the current year.

18 Post balance sheet events

There are no post balance sheet events to be disclosed.

19 Approval of the financial statements

The directors approved the financial statements on 26 March 2009.

Skillnets Board of Directors & Committees 2008

Business & Employers Representatives

Domhnall MacDomhnaill
(Chairperson)
Irish Business & Employers
Confederation (IBEC)

Sub committee:
Chair: Finance & General
Purposes

Brendan McGinty
Irish Business & Employers
Confederation (IBEC)

Sub committee:
Policy, Research
& Communications

Sexton Cahill
Irish Business & Employers
Confederation (IBEC)

Sub committee:
Chair: Policy, Research
& Communications

Niall Saul
McNamara Construction
Irish Business & Employers
Confederation (IBEC)

Sub committees:
Evaluation & Performance
Monitoring (Jan - Sept)
Audit and Finance &
General Purposes
(Sept - Dec)

Mairéad Divilly
Mazars
Small Firms Association
(SFA)

Sub committees:
Chair: Audit committee
and Finance & General
Purposes

Ian Talbot
Chambers Ireland

Sub committee:
Evaluation & Performance
Monitoring
*Appointed 11 September
2008*

Noelle O'Connell
Construction Industry
Federation

Sub committee:
Policy, Research
& Communications
*Appointed 1 January
2008*

John Dunne
Chambers Ireland

Sub committees:
Audit and Finance
& General Purposes
*Resigned 10 September
2008*

Employee Representatives

Sean Heading
Education, Training &
Organisational Services
Irish Congress of Trade
Unions (ICTU)

Sub committee:
Evaluation & Performance
Monitoring

Nuala Keher
Lionra - Regional Higher
Education Network
Irish Congress of Trade
Unions (ICTU)

Sub committee:
Policy, Research
& Communications

Peter Rigney
Irish Congress of Trade
Unions (ICTU)

Sub committees:
Audit and Finance
& General Purposes

Ministerial Representatives

Terry Hobdell
Irish Fencing & Railings Ltd

Sub committee:
Evaluation & Performance
Monitoring

John McDermott
Department of Enterprise,
Trade & Employment
(DETE)

Sub committees:
Audit and Finance
& General Purposes
*Appointed 11 December
2008*

Henry Murdoch

Sub committee:
Chair: Evaluation &
Performance Monitoring

John Daly
Department of Enterprise,
Trade & Employment
(DETE)
Resigned 31 March 2008

Secretary

Alan Nuzum

Appendix 1

Skillnets Strategic Pillars

There are four main areas, or strategic pillars, under which Skillnets supports its networks, as per its mandate.

1. NETWORK PILLAR	**2. NETWORK PILLAR**	**3. NETWORK PILLAR**
'Driving Skills Strategies through Sectors and Partnerships'	'Growing the Skills Base'	'Developing Local Learning Responses'
Individual networks	*Individual networks*	*Individual networks*

4. TRAINING PRACTICE PILLAR

(cross cutting themes)

'Building Best Practice in Learning and Development'

Inter-network Communities of Practice

PILLAR 1:
Driving Skills Strategies Through Sectors and Partnerships
The primary focus of this pillar is on enhancing skills and achieving best practice competence within industries and sectors. This pillar supports enterprises in any economic area to lead sector skills development. This may involve sector based partnerships for training between employees and enterprise, enterprises and enterprises, and between enterprises and others engaged in the world of learning.

Skillnets expertise in assisting enterprise networks to create broad-based sectoral partnership links has culminated in new alliances and co-operation arrangements between enterprise, providers, educational institutions and policy makers.

In particular, Skillnets has noted that there is a preference for enterprises (managers and workers in partnership) to identify and decide priorities and address training needs at sector level. The leadership of sector bodies and trade unions, the transfer of knowledge between large and small companies within a sector context, the identification of sector champions, the development of career paths, the emergence of sector specific standards and certification have been among the most pronounced features of the Skillnets experience.

Skillnets Strategic Pillars

PILLAR 2:
Growing the Skills Base

The aim of this pillar is to foster the development of new and higher levels of knowledge, skills and competence across the workforce. This supports life-long learning for employees as well as increasing the competitiveness of companies in a rapidly changing and increasingly knowledge based economy. This pillar enables employees at all levels within enterprises to move 'One Step Up' to raising their skill and employability options. This pillar is guided by four themes:

Theme 1 – Facilitating Access to Learning and Adaptability

This theme supports training networks focused on workers with low basic skills, those at risk of becoming unemployed in areas of the economy encountering rapid change, workers in declining sectors, non-national employees, part-time workers, women workers and older workers.

Skillnets has assisted with learning responses to help all groups of workers succeed in the labour force, particularly those who have limited access to training including workers with low basic skills.

Theme 2 – Building Management Capacity in SMEs

This theme supports learning activity within networks of SMEs and micro enterprises to develop the leadership, management and operational capacity of owner-managers and other key staff in those enterprises.

The management development needs of small businesses remains a priority for Skillnets and the organisation has been particularly effective in attracting SME owner managers and developing appropriate learning methods for this group.

Theme 3 – Increasing Adaptability of Workers to the Knowledge Economy

This theme supports companies and workers to implement training activity focused on helping workers to adapt to technological change and respond effectively to the challenges of the knowledge economy.

Of fundamental importance to sustaining national competitiveness is the need for Irish enterprises to embrace technological change and become full participants in the knowledge economy. Many workers need to develop the multi-faceted skills set that will allow this transformation to occur. This requires a major investment by companies, workers and the State working in partnership. Skillnets experience shows that there is a willingness to embrace change and a preference for enterprises (managers and workers in partnership) to identify and respond to this challenge through collaborative action.

Theme 4 – Adopting Advanced Business Practices for Increased Productivity

This theme supports training networks to implement leadership and organisational development, change management programmes in enterprises and to develop related skills. Areas include, for example, high performance work practices (team-working, gain sharing, communications etc), diversity/equality, computer integrated manufacturing (CIM), business awareness, sales and marketing, product development, cost reduction programmes, and other skills required for the adoption of advanced operational and management processes to gain competitive advantage.

An urgent need across Irish enterprise is the requirement for companies to excel in advanced operational processes, new methodologies in manufacturing and services, and new management, organisational and leadership developments to increase productivity.

Skillnets Strategic Pillars

PILLAR 3:
Developing Local Learning Responses

This pillar supports training networks with a local or regional focus to implement training aimed at reducing the relative disadvantage in current provision at local level. This action encourages the development of training networks to create dynamic, flexible systems with local bodies, training providers, educational establishments and regional agencies in a new partnership for workplace learning at local level.

Skillnets has played a key role in addressing gaps in current provision especially within a regional context. Resources and support have been provided on a flexible basis, with a specific regional focus, which has allowed regions to develop strategies and systems relevant to their specific situation. This has brought a new access to training for many enterprises within the economy, where locally based skills support was previously limited or unavailable.

PILLAR 4:
Growing the Skills Base

Pillar 4 is a practice development strand which aims to develop, transfer and promote best training and development practice across enterprises engaged in Skillnets networks. This pillar is not focused on the 'output' element of the network strategies (i.e. the skills, knowledge and competencies of trainee groups and enterprises). Instead it is looking at the 'processes' by which enterprise learning is identified, developed, delivered, evaluated and integrated within the overall business development system of firms.

This Pillar:
- promotes learning in enterprises
- supports the introduction of techniques for companies to determine value and return on investment in learning
- supports benchmarking systems for companies to assess and improve learning practice (such as Excellence Through People)
- supports methods of aligning learning to business goals
- supports capacity-building among in-company and external training providers
- provides support to networks seeking to create sector-relevant standards, modules or awards for independent certification and accreditation
- supports the development of methods to support individual trainee development, career planning and lifelong learning
- fosters other areas of practice development within enterprise training

Appendix 2

Skillnets Organisational Structure 2008

CEO
Alan Nuzum

Head of Finance & Services

Ian Menzies

Senior Programme Manager (SPM)
Support & Monitoring

Diane Dignam

Senior Programme Manager (SPM)
Development & Best Practice

Carl Blake

Head of Communications

John Holohan

Finance Support

Eilish Hayes
Marta Bialka

Admin Support

Vida Auksoriute
Emma Quane
Brónagh Minehane

Programme Support Managers

Tracey Donnery
Noreen Fitzpatrick
Donal O'Donovan
Brian O'Shaughnessy
Niamh Desmond

Programme Support

Kevin O'Neill
(Finance)

Joanna Piechota
(Administration)

Programme Support Managers

Mat Kujawa
Mick McHugh
Brenda Sheridan
David Flynn
Deirdre Keane

Programme Support

Pauliina Svensk
(Finance)

Alma Osmic
(Administration)

Comms Executive

Sinéad McGovern

Comms Support

Laoise Bray
Jenny Marchant

Appendix 3

TNP 2008 Network Listing

Network	Sector	Region	Website
ACIST Skillnet	Mixed	Midwest	www.skillsacist.ie
AIW Skillnet	Services	National	
ASCA Skillnet	Mixed	National	
Atlantic Training & Development Skillnet	Mixed	Northwest	www.atlantictraining.ie
Bakers and Confectioners Skillnet	Manufacturing	National	www.fcbaskillnet.ie
Ballyhoura Tourism Skillnet	Tourism	Midwest, Southwest	www.ballyhouracountry.com
BESTNet Skillnet	Technology	National	www.bestnet.ie
Biznetcork Skillnet	Mixed	Southwest	www.biznetcork.com
BMW Executive Skillnet	Mixed	Border, West	www.bmwexecutiveskillnet.ie
BMW Smallholder Skillnet	Agriculture	Border, West, Midlands	www.medpartnership.com
Border Edge Skillnet	Mixed	Border	www.cavanitc.ie
BREN Skillnet	Mixed	Midlands, Border	
Call Centre Skillnet	Services	National	
Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet	Mixed	Southeast	www.cktraining.ie
Catering & Hospitality Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.cateringandhospitality.ie
CBDN Skillnet	Childcare	National	www.cbdn.ie
CITA Skillnet	Construction	National	www.cita.ie
Clare Campus Skillnet	Mixed	Midwest	www.clarecampus.org
Construction Skillnet	Construction	National	www.constructionskillnet.ie
CPD FOCUS Skillnet	Services	National	www.lawsociety.ie
Craftbutcher Skillnet	Butchery	National	www.craftbutchers.ie
Design Ireland Skillnet	Services	National	www.designireland.ie
Design Shannon Skillnet	Mixed	Midwest, Southwest, Southeast	www.designshannon.ie
Digital Media Forum Skillnet	Technology	Dublin	www.digitalmediaforum.net
Donegal Design Directorate Skillnet	Mixed	Border	www.donegaldesigndirectorate.com
Dry Cleaning and Laundry Industry Skillnet	Services	National	www.dcls.ie
Dublin Business Women's Skillnet	Mixed	Dublin	www.dbws.ie
Dublin North Skillnet	Mixed	Dublin	www.dnskillnet.ie
Embracing Diversity Skillnet	Mixed	Dublin, Southeast, Southwest	
Emerge Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.emergeskillnet.ie
Engineers Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.engineersskillnet.com
English Language Learning Skillnet	Services	National	www.meiskillnet.ie
Enniscorthy Business Initiative Skillnet	Mixed	Southeast	www.eetc.ie
EnviroSkillnet	Services	National	
Equal Ireland Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.equalireland.com
Equestrian Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.horsesportireland.ie
Financial Services Skillnet	Financial	National	www.fsiskillnet.ie
Financial Solutions Skillnet	Financial	West	www.financialsolutionsskillnet.ie
Fingal Skillnet	Mixed	Dublin	www.fingalskillnet.com
First Polymer Training Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.firstpolymer.com
FRS Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.frsskillnet.com
FTMTA Skillnet	Agriculture	National	www.ftmtaskillnet.ie
Future Leaders Skillnet	Mixed	Midlands, Mideast, Dublin	www.futureleaders.ie
Gaeltachtai na Mumhan Skillnet	Mixed	Southwest, Southeast	www.gaeltachtnetwork.com
Galway Executive Skillnet	Mixed	West	www.galwayexecutiveskillnet.com
GMIT Innovation Skillnet	Mixed	West	www.innovatewest.org
Gréasán na Meán Skillnet	Media	West	www.greasannamean.ie

TNP 2008 Network Listing

Network	Sector	Region	Website
Greyhound Skillnet	Services	National	www.greyhoundskillnet.com
Hospitality Management Skillnet	Services	National	www.ihi.ie
HPSU Skillnet	Mixed	Border, Midlands, West	www.hpsuskillnet.com
IASC Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.iasc.ie
IBEC Retail Skillnet	Retail	National	www.ibecretailskillnet.com
ICBE Business Excellence Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.icbe.ie
ICOS Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.icosskillnet.ie
ICT Ireland Skillnet	Technology	National	www.ictirelandskillnet.org
IFA Skillnet	Agriculture	National	www.ifaskillnet.ie
IMDA Manufacturing Excellence Skillnet	Medical Devices	National	www.imdaskillnet.ie
Impact Measurement Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.impactmeasurement.org
Innovation & Lean/Sigma Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.ilsf.ie
International Trade Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.internationaltradeskillnet.com
Irish Coaching Skillnet	Services	National	www.icdn.ie
Irish Egg Supply Chain Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.iescskillnet.com
Irish Franchising Skillnet	Retail	Dublin, West, Southwest	
Irish Hardware Skillnet	Construction	National	www.ihbma.ie
Irish Pest Control Skillnet	Services	National	www.ipcap.ie
Irish Professional Photographers Skillnet	Services	National	www.irishphotographers.com
ISIT Skillnet	Security	National	www.isitskillnet.ie
ISME Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.isme.ie
ITAG Skillnet	Technology	West	www.itag.ie
Kaizen Training Skillnet	Manufacturing	National	www.kaizenproject.com
KTN Skillnet	Mixed	Southwest	www.ktn.ie
Learning Waves Skillnet	Media	National	www.learningwaves.ie
Learning West Skillnet	Mixed	West	www.learningwest.ie
LHP Skillnet	Healthcare	National	www.lhpskillnet.ie
Limerick Chamber Skillnet	Mixed	Midwest	www.limerickskillnet.ie
M1 Manufacturers' Skillnet	Manufacturing	Dublin, Border	
MBE Skillnet	Mixed	Midlands	
MidMed Skillnet	Medical Devices	Border, Dublin, Midlands, West	www.midmed.ie
Midwest Regional Engineering Skillnet	Engineering	Southwest, Midwest	www.midwestengineeringskillnet.ie
National Engineering Technical Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.netskillnet.com
National Organic Training Skillnet	Agriculture	National	www.nots.ie
NCNA Childcare Skillnet	Childcare	Border, Dublin, Mideast	www.ncnachildcareskillnet.ie
Northwest Transport Skillnet	Transport	Border	www.ntskillnet.ie
PharmaChem Skillnet	Pharmaceuticals	National	www.pharmachemskillnet.ie
Pharmacy Xcelerate Skillnet	Retail	National	
Positive2Work Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.positive2work.ie
Print and Packaging Skillnet	Manufacturing	National	www.printpacktraining.ie
Priority Learning for Change Skillnet	Mixed	National	
Private Healthcare Skillnet	Healthcare	National	www.phskillnet.ie
Procurement & Supply Management Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.iipmm.ie
Refrigeration Skillnet	Engineering	National	www.refrigerationskillnet.ie
Renewable Energy Skills Skillnet	Renewable Energy	National	www.renewableenergy.ie
Responsible Tourism Skillnet	Mixed	Border	www.responsibletourism.ie
Restaurants Association Skillnet	Mixed	National	
Retail Excellence Ireland Skillnet	Retail	National	www.retailexcellence.ie
ROLE Skillnet	Mixed	Border, West	www.roleskillnet.com
Rural Food Company Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.ruralfoodcompany.ie

TNP 2008 Network Listing

Network	Sector	Region	Website
Sales Skillnet	Services	West, Southwest, Midwest, Dublin	www.salesskillnet.ie
Shannon Marine and Leisure Skillnet	Services	Border, West, Midwest, Midlands	www.shannonmarineandleisureskillnet.ie
SLM Food & Drink Manufacturing Skillnet	Mixed	Midlands, Midwest, Mideast, Southeast, Southwest, Dublin	www.slmskillnet.com
SME Growth Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.icai.ie
Software Skillnet	Technology	National	www.isa-skillnet.com
South East Micro Skillnet	Mixed	Southeast	www.se-microskillnet.ie
South Kerry Skillnet	Mixed	Southwest	www.kerryskillnet.ie
Southern Tipperary Skillnet	Mixed	Southeast	www.clonmelchamber.com
South-West Healthcare Skillnet	Healthcare	National	www.healthcarenet.ie
Spa & Wellness Skillnet	Leisure	National	www.spaireland.eu
Space Industry Skillnet	Technology	National	www.spaceskills.net
Sport Horse Breeders Skillnet	Agriculture	National	
Taste 4 Success Skillnet	Mixed	Midwest	www.taste4success.ie
The Events Industry Skillnet	Services	National	www.eventsindustryskillnet.com
Timber Frame Skillnet	Construction	National	www.itfma.ie
Trainers' Learning Skillnet	Services	National	www.trainerslearningskillnet.com
Training Provider Competency Skillnet	Services	National	www.trainersnetwork.ie
Travel Professionals Skillnet	Travel	National	www.itaa.ie
U Learning Skillnet	Mixed	West, Midwest, Border	www.ulearning.ie
Union Learning Skillnet	Services	National	www.unionlearning.ie
Unlocking Innovation Skillnet	Mixed	National	
Waterford Chamber Skillnet	Mixed	Southeast	www.waterfordskillnet.com
Western Homebuilders Skillnet	Construction	West	
WIN Skillnet	Mixed	Border, West, National	
Wind Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.iwea.com
Woman at Work Skillnet	Mixed	National	www.womenatworkskillnets.ie

Region Glossary

National:	Nationwide
Border:	The counties of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo
West:	The counties of Galway, Mayo and Roscommon
Midlands:	The counties of Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath
Mid East:	The counties of Kildare, Meath and Wicklow
Dublin:	The city of Dublin, and the areas of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin
South East:	The counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary (South), Waterford and Wexford
South West:	The counties of Cork and Kerry
Mid West:	The counties of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary (North).

Notes

Boosting Skills and Productivity

Skillnets

Enterprise-led learning networks

Skillnets Ltd.

5th Floor, Q House,
76 Furze Road, Sandyford,
Dublin 18

Tel: 01 207 9630
Email: communications@skillnets.com
Web: www.skillnets.ie

NDP
National Development Plan
Transforming Ireland

An Roinn Fiontar, Trádála agus Fostaíochta
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

|S|F|A|

CHAMBERS IRELAND
IN BUSINESS FOR BUSINESS

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FEDERATION

STRONGER TOGETHER
CONGRESS
Irish Congress of Trade Unions

IBEC