

# WOOL HARVESTING

## **Situational Analysis and Assessment**

Prepared for Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational  
Excellence

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## CONTENTS

Prepared for Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence .....	1
<b>BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Wool Harvesting Training</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>PART ONE: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>International Review</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Australia.....	5
United Kingdom .....	6
<b>Aotearoa New Zealand</b> .....	<b>7</b>
The Wool Board Model .....	7
Post-Wool Board delivery.....	7
WOMOlife Wool Industry Training (WOMOlife) .....	10
Elite Wool Industry Training .....	13
Telford (Southern Institute of Technology) .....	14
<b>KEY THEMES</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Research Questions</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS AND HIGH-LEVEL OBSERVATIONS</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>Lessons for the next stage:</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>PART TWO: SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Next Steps</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Workforce Development Strategy .....	24
A Possible Framework .....	25
Design Options .....	26
Broader applicability.....	26
Proposed next steps: .....	27
The Steering Group .....	27
<b>APPENDIX</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>1. Research interview list</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>2. Key terms</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>TERM</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>DEFINITION</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>3. Abbreviations and Acronyms</b> .....	<b>29</b>

## BACKGROUND

The New Zealand Shearing Contractors Association (NZSCA) has been delivering a pilot industry training model through its Trust, Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ. This is funded with a Provincial Growth Fund investment. NZSCA believes the model is delivering well to meet the training requirements of the wool harvesting sector, and they saw this success as an opportunity for the industry. NZSCA approached the Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence (FFCoVE) to explore the potential to develop the model into a long-term solution.

A hui was convened to test the concept involving the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), Muka Tangata, Te Pūkenga, and the Primary ITO. Following agreement from this hui, FFCoVE approved a project definition to develop an evidence base to inform best practice recommendations for wool harvesting training. This included historical activity, current innovations, and delivery models.

The purpose of this paper is to enable a clear and shared understanding of what an effective workforce development model looks like for the wool harvesting sector. This could form the basis of a model that the vocational education sector can adopt in the context of the current vocational reforms.

This report is in two parts. The first part provides a situational analysis, which includes results and analysis of both international and national literature reviews, and stakeholder engagement to gather a range of perspectives on effective training models, past and present. It is designed to provide the 'state of play' in terms of sector support, desired outcomes, and effective characteristics of training in the Wool Harvesting sector.

The second part, a situational assessment, provides an agreed context to and understanding of effective training delivery modes and the preferred training model. It applies insights and lessons synthesised from the analysis to underpin a business case for a potential model, including operating model and resourcing options.

The primary objectives of the research were to:

- collect, collate, analyse and evaluate the delivery and attraction approaches used for wool harvesting in Aotearoa
- examine both national and international models
- test the options against the FFCoVE's vocational excellence framework and the new RoVE settings
- consider the broader applicability of the options across the Food and Fibre and wider VET sectors.

## DEFINITIONS

### Wool Harvesting Training

The Food and Fibre Sector in New Zealand is undergoing a considerable transformation in workforce development. This is partly the impact of the Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE) on education and training systems and partly due to the Ministry of Primary Industries' enabled engagement and the subsequent pan-sector impact initiated through the Food and Fibre Skills Action Plan and industry leadership.

Wool representatives have been active in the pan-sector collaboration and supporting the RoVE transformation. The development of the FFCoVE (Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence) has provided the opportunity for this project and the impetus has come from the active investment in Wool training through the Provincial Growth Fund and MPI's Sustainable Futures Funding.

For this project, the focus is on workforce development for the wool harvesting sector. This sector is seen to include shearing and wool handling, shed hands, pressers, graders, wool classers, and scourers.

## PART ONE: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

### International Review

This section provides a brief overview of the international evidence and practice. A desktop approach has been used to create this overview. The focus of the overview is on two countries, Australia and the United Kingdom, which appear to be the most comprehensive models.

Both countries have based their education and training model for wool harvesting on the original New Zealand Wool Board model. Expertise from the New Zealand Wool Board training team and its successor organisations such as Tectra have played significant roles in the development of the models used by both countries.

Australia and New Zealand have for some time been seen as setting the standard for wool harvesting, and variants of their education and training models are used in wool-producing countries such as Canada, the United States, and South Africa. However, these countries heavily rely on industry-generated training and do not appear to have any significant government support or national-level organisation.

While the two countries being looked at have largely replicated NZ's training model there is a unique cultural point of difference. This, of course, is the importance of Māori kaupapa and the large proportion of Māori active in NZ's wool harvesting sector. While other nations and blocs have made efforts to better support their indigenous populations and/or improve the cultural relevance of education training, the unique position of Tangata Whenua in Aotearoa suggests that such insights have limited applicability – Aotearoa alone can offer insights into what works for Māori.

## Australia

The Australian education and training model for wool harvesting, and the vast majority of delivered learning, is led and resourced by the not-for-profit Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and its subsidiary The Woolmark Company (TWC) which emerged from a range of reforms and restructuring in the 1990s and early 2000s.

As an enterprise, AWI has full responsibility for the 'farm to fashion' supply chain nurturing talent, research and development, and investing in marketing and wool growing quality. It funds a comprehensive range of education and training courses, products, and learning resources.

The AWI, as the designated Industry Services Body for the Australian wool industry, collects woolgrower levies and matching federal funding as well as income from the sale of Woolmark licenses. A reduced levy and the effects of Covid have significantly reduced revenue over the last two years.

The AWI funds free wool harvesting education and training for novice, improver, and professional shearers using modular/residential 5-day events (courses) and wool handler training in tandem with the shearer training events. This extensive regional coaching programme is delivered by a range of education and industry partner organisations. The courses/schools are supplemented by a comprehensive range of video training and hard copy resources.

Beyond this training structure, AWI and the Shearing Contractors Association also offer elite athlete training resources through videos. AWI provides an off-farm extension programme that introduces wool and wool careers to primary, secondary, and tertiary students.

To meet the needs of tertiary-level learners it uses the Wool Science, Technology, and Design Education programme. This provides introductory and advanced courses in textile science, design, and manufacturing. This also covers wool production education including classing and scouring.

A key AWI strategy is education throughout the supply chain domestically and internationally to inspire, educate and connect designers, brands, and retailers to use Australian wool in their products. Through the Australian Wool Education Trust (part of the AWI team) resources are developed for students and educators as well as education for any who are on the 'fibre to fabric' supply chain. AWI also uses a digital platform, the Woolmark Learning Centre to facilitate the education of all stakeholders in the global wool industry.

There is a limited amount of education and training for wool harvesting in the formal education system (TAFEs) with Level 3 and 4 shearing and wool handling and Level 4 wool classing certificates offered to trainees in NSW, West Australia, and Tasmania and a subsidised Registered Training Organisation (RTO) traineeship programme in Queensland. AWI also supports TAFE courses with resources and trainers. However, the SCAA training arm, Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc. provides exclusively in Victoria and South Australia.

The first takeaway from this desktop analysis is that the formal education system is in no position to offer the amount and depth of training and resources funded and supported by AWI and its various subsidiaries and partners.

The second takeaway is that the education and training model based is very familiar to the NZ wool sector: hands-on practical in-shed training courses and coaching events organised around competency tiers, nationally accredited, and supplemented by an extensive

arrangement of training resources, mainly videos. A significant emphasis is placed on physical wellbeing, safe shearing techniques, and technologies.

A third takeaway is a strategic focus on the whole of the supply chain, connecting farm-to-fashion globally as well as domestically. Clear pathways and pipeline structure mark the education and training model for this supply chain. A fourth observation is the use of a tiered structure for recognising and credentialling shearing competency. While the key focus is on novice and improver shearers more experienced and highly skilled levels are catered for – rising star and legend categories.

### Case Studies from Australia

AWI publishes a quarterly magazine “Beyond-the-bale”. Both the March and June issues offer insights into wool harvesting training. While not explicitly a case study, the March issue profiles a novice shearer and includes the scheduled regional delivery for 2022.

<https://www.wool.com/globalassets/wool/about-awi/media-resources/publications/beyond-the-bale/beyond-the-bale---march-2022.pdf>

<https://www.wool.com/globalassets/wool/about-awi/media-resources/beyond-the-bale/june-2022/beyond-the-bale-june-2022.pdf>

### United Kingdom

British Wool is the approved provider for shearing and wool handling training in the UK. Using a team of registered instructors, courses are available throughout Scotland, England, and Wales. There is an extensive provision covering many venues. In Northern Ireland, they use Ulster Wool as the service provider but are supported and managed by British Wool across the supply chain. In both parts of Ireland, the British Wool training and certification model is used by trainers.

These are usually user pays hands-on, in-shed two-day courses, tailored to the individual level of ability from absolute beginner to advanced and supporting competition entry. Bespoke courses for shearing gangs are also offered. Trainees are assessed and if successful, certified using the four seals – from the basic level ‘blue seal’ to the advanced ‘gold seal’. A 5-year grading apprenticeship is also on offer.

Over 1,000 shearers/wool handlers are trained each year. Unlike in Australia and New Zealand, there do not appear to be very many videos or other online resources available to supplement hands-on learning. Safe practices and animal welfare are obvious on their websites and in the training products.

While there are very few specialised courses offered in the public education system, there are resources developed and available for primary schools to use.

The main takeaways from looking at British Wool:

- they based their shearing and wool handling training model, particularly the seals certification, on the NZ Wool Board model. The courses are shorter in length and remain a traditional practical hands-on, in-shed training model.
- The shearing pathway is well-catered for and there is quite a lot of emphasis placed on recruiting into the blue seal and absolute beginner courses but there is no pipeline focus of note compared to Australia and even NZ in its current state.

- With their industry being strongly wool driven they face globally low prices (same as NZ's strong wool growers) which without government funding support drives low investment in wool harvesting training and education.

## Aotearoa New Zealand

### The Wool Board Model

The Wool Board model was respected by many, adopted internationally, and worked well for 40-50 years. It was for industry, by industry. The model trained up to 350 wool harvesting staff per year. It was initiated in the 1950s, by Godfrey Bowen. He was highly regarded as a shearer and a personality, the perfect person to build the capability. “He had the mana and could do the delivery well.”

Bowen built a hands-on model and a team of people around him, all good shearers, well known and respected. Their practical background, despite no formal teaching qualifications, and the selection of a trainer with mana, was important. It morphed from shearing to wool handling and pressing.

The model was regionally based. Trainers travelled to wherever training was needed and ran short courses on demand. It was structured and regular. This training used demonstration, close attention to technique and real-time correction of issues, and peer-to-peer learning. It can be best described as practical hands-on, in-shed training.

The Wool Board also offered ‘trade-days’, which was an on-demand course/training – a contractor could just ring to order. This attracted more people to the longer courses.

There was a training base in Manawatu and in Christchurch which ran week-long residential block course delivery. This was tiered: junior, immediate, and senior courses.

For more advanced training and registration, for example, wool classers, and as a broad-based introduction to the wool industry for people working in service sectors past the farm gate, both Lincoln and Massey Universities offered the wool certificate and diploma. Shearer and wool handling had no distance learning component. Even with Q-stencil (very advanced wool handlers), there was no distance learning, it was all practical.

The key components of the Wool Board model are still considered to be effective today, including residential and block components, the tiered approach, and the holistic elements, including healthy technique, movement, and, stretching.

A hugely positive impact on training was the farmer wool levy. The financial support provided for the development and delivery of the popular ‘Wool Board’ training model has long been regarded as a major factor in its success. This belief is backed up by the Australians using a farmer levy to support their successful training system.

### Post-Wool Board delivery

As strong wool prices plummeted, farmers were not seeing financial returns for their wool, and the focus became growing for meat, rather than wool and meat. The impact of the global decline in strong wool as a product increased the challenges for wool harvesting education

and training. The disbanding of the Wool Board in 2003 was a significant side-effect of the deteriorating market conditions and increased grower disillusion.

***Sheep numbers declined in New Zealand, from a peak of 70 million sheep in 1982 to 25.6 million in 2021 (Statistics, NZ), which simply means, less work on offer.***

Alongside usual industry elements such as seasonality and geographical isolation, wool training faltered, and inefficiencies and ineffectiveness increased. As there were not necessarily the job outcomes, the investment in, and the perception of, the need for training became less of a priority for organisations. Lack of entrants became an issue, with many employers preferring to poach, rather than train. Wool classing certificates and diplomas delivered by universities ceased during this time.

Consequently, there was a steady decline in demand for training and increasingly less focus from growers on harvesting quality.

After the Wool Board disbanded, its training model was sold to Tectra, a private provider formed by ex-Wool Board staff. Initially, the training continued to receive funding from the grower's levy, collected by Meat and Wool NZ, until discontent with both the wool levy and ongoing backlash against wool industry leadership led to the levy being rejected in 2010. The loss of this source for financial support for training was an unintended side-effect, ushering in long-term uncertainty and challenges for wool harvesting training delivery.

Following the demise of the levy, Tectra became the main provider for wool harvesting training, bringing its Wool Board expertise. Tectra was funded as a Private Training Establishment by TEC and was also sub-contracted by the Primary ITO to provide training to its trainees.

Wool harvesting education and training became dependent on government funding and industry training through the Primary ITO. Unfortunately, the industry training model was never fully accepted as being 'fit for purpose', leading to many attempts over the years to match training with the sector's business model and an increasingly transient workforce.

Tectra replicated the regional delivery approach offering qualifications in shearing, wool handling, and wool technology, and developed an apprenticeship model as a Modern Apprenticeship Co-ordinator. The Certificate in Wool Technology had previously been delivered by the universities and was used by the NZ Wool Classers Association (established 2006) as the key entry requirement for new classers.

When Tectra ceased trading in 2016, the Primary ITO continued training shearing and wool handling trainees. The loss of the Tectra model was a big blow to employers leading to a further decline in training. This blow to training delivery saw the NZSCA become involved in looking for a training solution. It set up Te Ako Wools in 2016 as its training arm to fill the gap left by Tectra, and work with the Primary ITO using industry training funding to deliver shearing and wool handling courses across the country. After the NZSCA secured Provincial Growth Funding in 2020 it established Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ as its



new training arm and used the WOMOlif e model. Te Ako Wools discontinued training which left very few accredited trainers able to provide formal qualifications.

The Primary ITO's difficulties around the demise of Tectra and then the subsequent end of the Te Ako initiative further increased distrust in the formal training model. This was increasingly reflected in both ambivalent and resistant attitudes from employers to the formal industry training model. The low trust problem was further compounded by the time and cost impact of the training model on their businesses.

The combined and ongoing effect of the decline in strong wool, low prices for growers, and an industry training funding model that did not match workforce dynamics, therefore, continued to undermine demand.

Funding, as an enabler of wool harvesting training options, has long been an issue of viability and sustainability for training models. It drives the type of delivery and is formal qualification dependent. It does not support specialised, industry-responsive, regional, or short courses. In other words, the present system settings for qualifications and credit requirements do not fit the popular and preferred wool board model.

Those involved with various iterations of training in the era before Elite Wool Industry Training and WOMOlif e Wool Industry Training (WOMOlif e) models felt that funding was caught up in education provider academic administration, rather than getting through to trainers and students and thus did not serve the industry.

Many of those interviewed felt that funding has made delivery competitive and fragmented nationally. The loss of a specialist provider, Tectra, reinforced the damage done to wool harvesting education training with the demise of the Wool Board.

***“Everyone is scrambling to get their bit, to keep their head above water.”***

Private providers must meet compliance and quality assurance requirements, but are also running a business, and required to make a profit. The education system settings – compliance requirements around funding and qualifications along with non-viable funding rates for both training and education provision – were a huge barrier and a vacuum in training provision and demand eventuated.

This vacuum was partly filled by the Primary ITO trying to match the training model to the sector and use its Trades Academy to encourage interest amongst secondary school learners.

The Primary ITO also attempted to address the qualification-end of wool harvesting training with qualification reviews, changing unit standards, and developing micro-credentials. Unfortunately, matching credit value through to the actual requirement of industry training and appropriate funding has been difficult to address, further undermining employer and industry support for the industry training model.

The resulting training vacuum saw a user-pays, employer-led model emerge in 2018, initially through Elite Wool Industry Training. The result was a resurgence in both training and trainee numbers. This was followed by the introduction of the WOMOlif e model through

Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ (using the Provincial Growth Fund grant to the NZSCA) in 2020.

Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ, the training arm of the NZSCA, also developed Tahi Ngātahi, an online learning platform to pass on skills and safety tips to all those involved in the shed. Tahi Ngātahi, a joint initiative between NZSCA, Federated Farmers, Worksafe NZ, and ACC, was launched in 2018 with over 800 participants since.

A new pilot training programme based in Tairāwhiti/Hawkes Bay and Otago/Southland has also been introduced by Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ, targeting school leavers, unemployed and underemployed people, career changers, and those wishing to upskill. Meanwhile, the wool classing part of the value chain was going through its own recovery from the demise of Tectra. Lincoln University through its Telford campus was delivering some shearing training so took over the wool technology delivery using its home campus. This lasted for 18 months before Lincoln pulled out of wool technology delivery because of viability concerns and TEC requiring it to divest itself of Telford.

Taratahi picked up the delivery of the wool technology certificate, which then ceased when its business did in 2019. The wool technology certificate survived and is being delivered by the Southern Institute of Technology, soon to become part of the new national polytechnic, Te Pūkenga. This certificate is proving increasingly popular and well supported by employers throughout the value chain, in part owing to significant industry input in revising course content a few years ago.

While there have been several approaches and many efforts the industry is still looking for a long-term solution that it will find acceptable.

### **WOMOLife Wool Industry Training (WOMOLife)**

WOMOLife is a pilot training model which is overseen by Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ in response to a new training approach developed by the New Zealand Shearing Contractors' Association (NZSCA). The NZSCA funded the WOMOLife pilot through a \$1.8m investment grant from the Government's Provincial Growth Fund.

The pilot targeted 270 trainees to complete various programmes offered. They have exceeded that target achieving 311 completions, 70% of which are Māori. The gender balance is 70% male, and 30% female. The completions include 74 new entrants, 73 beginners, and 164 upskilling trainees. Courses have been offered in Manawatu, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa, and Southland.

The WOMOLife motto is: "Work-wise, move wise for a longer, more sustainable career". WOMOLife is purposeful in terms of vision and values. This buy-in is a key foundation in the model and is woven throughout the training.

***"I learned a heap that I didn't know that I can back to work and put into action. 100% improved my shearing, I learned a lot about my gear, my grinding, and improved my pattern quite a bit."***

WOMOLife runs hands-on, in-shed residential programmes in a tiered approach that includes: Comprehensive New Entrant (entry-level skills for shed work), Beginner Courses (wool handling, shearing), and Upskill Courses (wool handling or shearing). In addition to this, they have an online platform that includes course content and training videos with experts.

The intention behind this was to enable a generation that uses smartphones and digital media to access training and connection anywhere and anytime. The training also features life skills and wellbeing modules such as: "Move Wise, Eat Wise, Money Wise, and Communication Skills" for a holistic approach and to increase productivity and ensure safety. Phone and video support is offered to trainees.

Trainers also have a full induction and training package which includes full programme coordination and protocols as well as individual mentoring by industry experts.

Currently, WOMOLife offers training programmes only, there is no credential or qualification attached. They believe it would be good to explore whether a qualification could be mapped to provide recognition by NZQA for the training and then be eligible for tertiary education funding.

Much of the model was based on what has previously been considered effective training in the industry. It has incorporated a lot of the original Wool Board model, which includes the residential immersion blocks, practical hands-on, in-shed delivery, and a tiered approach (new entrants, beginners, and upskilling) to recognise competency and progression.

It was noted that in the upskilling courses, the trainees are already experienced, and trainers target their approach in-shed on individual training needs. The tiered approach is considered highly effective. This allows learning a block at stage one to prepare, the ability to get into sheds and practice, and then return for the next level. It has also enabled the engagement and upskilling of those already in the industry. Furthermore, it maps out a career pathway for shearers.

Shearing, wool handling, and pressing are specialist training. It is technical, practical, and hands-on; thus, the training needs to be also. The skills need to be learned kinaesthetically and in the shed, not in a classroom. The residential and block course practical training is considered highly effective for the full immersion experience that allows authentic work-day training, technical skill learning, and practices with the reality of employment in the industry.

The training is underpinned by a social learning model and builds a sense of "everyone is in it together". This is an important feature of the full-immersion, residential component and allows training in anti-bullying and teaches actions and consequences are important, which cannot be taught to the same level in a simulated environment. It also allows for life skills (including nutrition and movement and communication), employment skills, and financial skills learning.

The concept of training 'rural athletes' has been well-adopted and has been seen to raise the profile of the sector. Life skills support is key. The holistic approach, movement, and nutrition are reinforced right throughout the training, not just in the residential component. These

elements are seen as necessary, effective, and worthwhile for longer-term retention and success in the industry.

***“The eating, that has been a good thing. Just the three days just being here I have had more energy than in the last year and that is just due to eating-wise.”***

Distance learning via videos has been viewed as an important support mechanism. Given the seasonality and geographical limitation, it is a key component. All students, including Māori, engage with the video content. It has been appealing to youth who naturally engage with the content, which is bite-sized, relevant, and accessible. It has also been used by those already experienced, including contractors for upskilling.

Follow-up calls and maintaining a connection with trainees have been important in providing pastoral support and caring. It has been noted that pastoral care remains one of the largest areas that require further training and support (for trainers), and the identification of effective, available methods to support trainees and employers.

Effective management, planning, and protocols for programme coordination are key features of the effectiveness of the programme. Historically, within industry training models, the programme coordination has been left to trainers. This did not work well and caused fragmentation and consistency issues. A well-structured and organised model that flows top-down through to the trainers and the students is considered highly advantageous and allows trainers to focus on training. It also helps trainees learn protocols, organisation, and understand boundaries. Shearing shed work is in two-hour blocks and the training is planned to the minute. Initially, the trainers questioned this level of detail, however, found it worked extremely well and ensured everything is covered and the training is consistent across courses.

For Māori engagement, retention and success, there is an understanding of what works well, and this has been implemented in the approach. This includes a focus on vision and value buy-in first and foremost and they believe the ongoing repetition of this is important for Māori. “Vision, values, this is the ‘why’ of what we are doing. You are valued, respected, and accepted. We are in this together. You are safe here.” Relationship-building is key, and they believe that the model must be underpinned by a sense of connection, which includes a feel of the marae, and whanaungatanga.

***“Our Kaupapa is wired that way. It is the same as on the marae. If they buy into the vision and values, we get 150% buy-in. If not, we don’t, it is that simple, but key. It is family, it is social.”***

There are a number of elements that support this social-cultural ethos, including the live-in, residential component, holistic training, follow-up support, and pastoral care.

Trainers identified that Māori needs structure, organisation, rules, and boundaries, that are simple, clear, and reinforced regularly. The model has supported this by being well-

organised with clear protocols and boundaries. The no-bullying policy is seen as necessary and authority figures are needed to ensure it is adhered to, so people feel safe and supported.

In the WOMOlif e model, all trainers have mentoring, training, and webinars by 'record holders', people with mana. This works well. As do youth promotions. It is felt that youth engage with youth and naturally engage with video promotional content.

It was noted that a contractor-based model needs following up. This would be to get the contractors on board, they know their people (trainers can know about students beforehand) and they can support alongside. This would remove barriers such as time off/loss of income/geographical issues, to attend a full immersion block course.

### Elite Wool Industry Training

Elite Wool Industry Training was formally incorporated in March 2018. It was established in response to the training vacuum left by the demise of Tectra; the ongoing desire for a training model more like the Wool Board model; concerns being expressed at a visible decline in the quality of wool harvesting; and some shearing contractors looking for a training solution.

In setting up Elite Wool Industry Training the founders reached back to the Wool Board model using a user-pays model. They soon found that their business model and pricing were struggling to be sustainable and viable. They considered becoming a Private Training Establishment (PTE) but the government of the day didn't want any more PTEs.

Elite Wool Industry Training saw an opportunity in the Provincial Growth Fund and worked with the NZSCA on a funding proposal. The NZSCA successfully applied for the funding grant and WOMOlif e and its model were chosen to deliver the training committed to.

Elite Wool Industry Training decided to continue operating and to their surprise found that demand increased to over 300 trainees in 2021. The takeaway is that the Wool Board model remained popular with contractors and trainees.

Elite Wool Industry Training delivers 3-day hands-on, in-shed courses at \$630 per trainee for shearing and \$400 per trainee for wool handling. They reintroduced the four Seals credentialling to underpin their tiered model and reproduced the Tectra handbook which was the key resource supporting personal development, wellbeing, self-management, and safe delivery. They have and use videos on their training website to support their face-to-face training.

Elite Wool Industry Training also has found themselves doing a lot with schools on a user pays basis. They included taster courses and video introductions to the industry. This was all well-received by schools and learners apart from the cost which schools struggle with. This of course puts a limit on numbers.

Another opportunity was picked up through the Universal College of Learning (UCOL) using the Taratahi facilities, to deliver shearing courses for the Growing Future Farmers initiative funded through both Provincial Growth Funding and MPI's Sustainable Futures Fund. Furthermore, they provide training on behalf of the NZ Merino Company.

Elite Wool Industry Training is acutely aware that its user-pays model has challenges in regards to continuing commercial viability. While they have looked to deliver through grant funding, they are conscious that it is only sustainable in the short term. Formal system funding is not attractive because the system settings and the theory-focused nature of the

qualifications do not work for their customers who want the Wool Board model and not the formal industry training model.

If they had the resources, there are improvements they would like to make like in-shed follow-up and more face-to-face pastoral support.

Elite Wool Industry Training has noticed significant changes in trainee recruitment. There has been an increase in participation by young Māori and young women, but the biggest change is the shift from young people with rural and farming family backgrounds to predominantly attracting urban trainees. While the increased numbers are an upside, these changes bring more issues and cost in academic and pastoral support. The biggest sources for these urban trainees are schools and the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).

Elite Wool Industry Training firmly believes the practical hands-on, in-shed training model, a face-to-face model for both learnings, and pastoral support work best for the deeper issues these young people bring with them. Videos are useful but, in their view, best used in a simulated working environment.

### **Telford (Southern Institute of Technology)**

Telford currently offers a distance programme for the New Zealand Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing (Level 4). Telford also has an NZQA-approved Woolclip Grading, course, a regionally based short course for wool graders that runs for two-three days. Currently, this is un-funded and therefore not offered. Tutors feel this is a shame because it would act as a pathway and is particularly important for the quality of wool.

The New Zealand Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing has origins in the Lincoln and Massey wool certificates. It is delivered part-time over two years, with a one-week block course covering the practical requirement and online, distance delivery.

While a requirement for aspiring wool classers many others participate including wool growers, and staff working for brokers, wool merchants, scours, manufacturers, designers, and exporters. Also, a few have participated just to learn more about wool.

The wool technology programme develops a range of skills and knowledge relating to the production, harvesting, classification, and processing of wool including the wool supply chain, and wool processing systems. Importantly, employers appear to now have confidence in the course content.

The distance delivery has enabled more people to be able to enrol and complete and fees-free has been an enabler. Currently, there are 60 distance students enrolled, with another mid-year intake for a further 17 students a significant growth in demand.

***“This is the most students enrolled in this type of certificate since the 1970s.”***

It is believed that this resurgence in interest is for a few reasons. Fine wool prices are good, even though cross-bred prices are not. There are seen to be plenty of opportunities in wool and the ability to work in any industry sector, not just as a wool classer, but in wool stores (merchants, brokers, exporters), scouring industry, further processing, and spinning. Primarily students come from wool handling, lots of farmers, particularly females from farms

and in the fine wool (merino) industry. They also get enrolments from Massey and Lincoln Ag-Science graduates.

Tutors are clear that training and building capability are very important, because as demand increases, so must the product, therefore the people delivering it must be well-trained. They believe the quality and preparation of strong wool has dropped over the years with the earning focus being on the meat and not the whole sheep/lamb including the wool.

Furthermore, efforts by Telford, with the Primary ITO, to introduce formal micro-credentials in the Wool Harvesting sector, have had limited success to date.

## KEY THEMES

### Research Questions

#### 1. What wool harvesting education and training delivery models and modes have been considered to be effective or ineffective?

The residential, full-immersion block course is seen as highly effective for authentic in-shed, practical hands-on, and holistic training. It naturally provides a social, cooperative learning environment, which serves all trainees and is particularly important for Māori.

A tiered approach to competency recognition is universally accepted as being important to allow a stepped pathway through training and work experience and the ability to engage those already experienced in the industry.

Technical training is highly effective when it is practical, hands-on, in the shed, and structured around a typical workday. Overly theoretical approaches would be ineffective.

A holistic approach is a necessity and must include nutrition, safety, movement, and a focus on the athletic part of the role and profile.

Life skills training is mandatory. There is a need for social learning, anti-bullying, action-consequence understanding as well as learning about boundaries. More focus needs to include drug and alcohol awareness and addiction support.

Literacy, numeracy, financial skills, and employment skills need to be a feature of delivery models.

Having a digital platform and videos has been seen as an effective way for accessible, relevant content, engagement, and retention, as well as raising the profile and professionalism of the industry.

Models that have a strong component of leadership, vision, and explicit values are believed to effectively engage and retain trainees, particularly Māori. In effect, this affirms the mantra “what works for Māori will work for everyone”.

A highly structured, organised, regionally focused, and developed programme of delivery is effective. Devolving course development and coordination to trainers has been ineffective in the past.

Models that are delivered by providers with expensive top-heavy administration have not survived in the past.

An institutional approach with no industry-sector knowledge has not been effective. The formal industry training model was never fully accepted as being 'fit for purpose' leading to many attempts over the next 20 years to match training with the sector's business model and an increasingly transient workforce.

The education system settings – compliance requirements around funding and qualifications along with non-viable funding rates for both training and education provision were a huge barrier and a vacuum in training provision and demand eventuated.

Some public provider promotional models have not worked well in the past and have not connected. It needs to be connected by industry and through industry channels and word of mouth to be effective.

## **2. Which of these models enable Kaupapa Māori opportunities?**

Overall, Tangata Whenua has been a long-standing and large component of the industry workforce and is respected as highly valuable. Māori participation in the wool harvesting industry is generational and the social structure and nature of shearing gangs are highly conducive to the social cooperative learning that is valuable for Māori. Māori inclusion in consultation and governance was felt to have been a long-standing feature and something the industry has been proud of.

“Shearing and wool handling has always been inclusive; it is one of the great things about the industry. It has always been about your skill level and work ethic that has got respect, not who you are”.

The WOMOlife model explicitly defines the leadership, vision, and values component as an enabler, as well as the social learning aspect, in building trust, cultural engagement, and confidence. They felt that as many trainers are Māori, this was naturally woven in and not signalled intentionally. The team interviewed felt more explicit work could be done to identify what inclusivity looks like and if anything could be done to better harness, embrace and strengthen it.

It is acknowledged that there is real poverty at the regional level and that this disproportionately affects Māori. A regional model which provides a barrier-free entry into “giving wool harvesting training a go” is seen as very important. This includes a fees-free approach for introductory training. Whilst it is assumed that a user-pays model is required, removing cost as a barrier to initial training is seen as necessary for attracting and recruiting at a regional level. Currently, this has been effective for WOMOlife, as well as a North Island shearing business, who provides training at its own cost to ensure a trained pipeline of staff.



### **3. What understandings can be drawn from the evaluation of the WOMOlife model?**

The adoption of the key features that worked in the Wool Board model was an effective strategy. The residential, practical hands-on, immersion component and the tiered approach are highly regarded as effective.

The robust structure, processes, and protocols have been highly effective, it has meant that trainers can get on and train, rather than be course developers or content creators. The online platform for this has meant transparency and accessibility for trainers. The induction programme for trainers has worked well.

The leadership, vision, and values are inclusive and support Māori.

There is compelling feedback that the holistic approach (nutrition, movement, anti-bullying) is well-received and working.

The digital platform and videos have been key to the WOMOlife model. They have been widely used. Other parties have looked at adopting the approach for wool classing.

Overall, anecdotal feedback is, that there has been a direct lift in professionalism as a result of the pilot. Other anecdotal feedback acknowledges that it has captured the 'good bits' of the Wool Board model but is not yet fully understood across the sector.

There is awareness of the competitive tension between some Elite Wool Industry Training adherents and WOMOlife but it is recognised that both organisations have more similarities than differences in their delivery model.

The free cost of training has mixed feedback. There are differing opinions ranging from those who feel that some cost applied would have been beneficial, as it would have set expectations in the industry and, also for the longer-term sustainability of the model. Others have felt that this removed barriers to attraction and recruitment in the industry.

The next phase of WOMOlife will require some form of funding model to enable a sustainable future. The question is, can the education system settings be adapted to fit the model, or will it need to be user pays?

### **4. What international, historical, or current practices can we learn from?**

Australia has a similar, comparable training model. It has adapted much of the NZ Wool Board model with the help of NZ expertise. Noticeably, similar trends and events in the wool markets and workforce shortages have transpired in Australia, which has affected training.

However, the Australian wool industry, being a predominantly fine wool industry, has retained the strong grower focus and government support that underpins its funding and supply chain strategies. Along with the scale it has, its training model is robust compared to New Zealand.

It is noted that many workers are trained in New Zealand and then they go to Australia, with estimates that 50% of Australia's workforce will be trained in New Zealand. Others recognise that many New Zealanders access the free training offered in Australia.

Australia is popular with New Zealanders for the ability to earn more, approximately double the wages available at home. Also, it was identified that New Zealanders like the climate and the fact that due to climate you can work five days a week mostly.

Most importantly, the Australian season and the New Zealand season have aligned better in recent times. This is increasingly advantageous for those who are looking to make shearing and wool handling more of a full-time work opportunity. Some even go to the United Kingdom for further work opportunities. The transient nature of the workforce is an increasingly important element in any solution for New Zealand.

The first finding from this desktop analysis is that the formal education system in Australia is in no position to offer the amount and depth of training and resources funded and supported by AWI and its various subsidiaries and partners. The combination of government subsidy and industry levy is a successful model even though it has been reduced in recent years.

The second finding is that the education and training model based is very familiar to the NZ wool sector. Hands-on practical in-shed training courses and coaching events organised around competency tiers, nationally accredited, and supplemented by an extensive arrangement of training resources, mainly videos. A significant emphasis is placed on physical wellbeing and safe shearing techniques and technologies.

A third finding is that the use of a tiered structure for recognising and credentialling shearing competency is vital. While the key focus is on novice and improver shearers more experienced and highly skilled levels are catered for through upskilling and competition – for example ‘rising star’ and ‘legend’ categories.

The fourth finding is the need for strategic focus on the whole of the supply chain, connecting farm-to-fashion globally as well as domestically. Clear pathways, a pipeline structure, and upskilling focus mark the education and training model connected to this supply chain and drives a whole lot of purpose and opportunity.

Some believe it would be interesting to sit down with Australian industry stakeholders to discuss funding and potential for shared training delivery. State and Federal differences perhaps have been challenging. However, there is some appetite to explore a trans-Tasman model. For those unsure, this was seen as a risk of losing staff, whereas others felt that this was happening anyway, so a transparent arrangement, may provide benefits. Improving the alignment of shearing seasons would help mitigate this risk.

An interesting initiative in Western Australia was the use of a mobile bus, completely fitted out with all the gear that was previously used train in remote areas. It was identified that this could be used in New Zealand for agricultural training in schools, providing short training and tasters, as well as getting into the urban areas for promotion and to spark interest. Whilst rural people have more natural exposure to the wool industry, urban people, have much less so.

A government policy to recognise training between New Zealand and Australia has been in place for a significant amount of time without being implemented. While the intent still lingers, it is clear that there had been historical issues with different education and industry training settings and with the recognition of learning.

Increasing knowledge and understanding of this agreement, ensuring pathways are clearer and recognition of prior learning is readily transparent is an area that could be improved. Use

of fit-for-purpose micro-credentials and digital badging, as well as a portable and digital resume, would add value here.

The British system has been developed from the NZ system with strong support from NZ expertise. There are over 30,000 growers in the UK and Ireland organised through British Wool.

We derive the following key insights from looking at British Wool:

- They based their shearing and wool handling training model, particularly the seals certification, on the NZ Wool Board model. The courses are shorter in length and remain a traditional practical hands-on, in-shed training model.
- The shearing pathway is well-catered for and there is quite a lot of emphasis placed on recruiting into the blue seal and absolute beginner courses but here is no pipeline focus of note compared to Australia and even NZ in its current state.
- With their industry being strong wool driven they face globally low prices (same as NZ's strong wool growers) which without government funding support drives low investment in wool harvesting training and education.
- Training systems are a service rather than a strategic element for British Wool.

#### **5. What educational and training options would be best supported by the RoVE's new system settings?**

There is a reasonable level of training going on, however, there are different funding models. WOMOLife is government funded for its pilot and Elite Wool Industry Training is a user-pays model. Some businesses provide their in-house training to ensure a pipeline of trained staff.

More money and investment into training are required. "When you look at what it contributes in terms of export earnings, GDP, the investment in training is not aligned – it is minimal. Series of governments have not provided adequate investment and that impacts productivity – of one of the most productive sectors in New Zealand."

Additionally, transparency into the use of funding and how much of that is dedicated to actual training is identified as crucial. It was estimated that in a provider delivery model, only 20% of funding gets to actual training, with the rest absorbed into provider administration. It was also discussed that funding should not be able to be manipulated for training provider purposes, or creative use of funds in the name of training and that some transparency about funding is required.

If a provision of training is centralised, it was agreed that it must be industry-led. The right people must be involved to ensure the delivery of funds gets to the training. One interviewee had been part of the consultation (the Primary ITO Industry Partnership Group) for 10 years.

***“What has been created in consultation, co-design, goes away and never comes back as it was designed, it is recreated to fit boxes that fit qualifications and funding and it doesn't resemble what industry needs.”***

There was a uniform opinion that consistency across North and South Islands is required. There is a need for a common direction and a transparent national pathway. The (WOMOlife) pilot in the North, which has worked well, will need to move to a sustainable resourcing model over the next 12 months.

All agreed that more pastoral care support to both trainers and trainees is crucial and necessary and a wider-sector approach, that is funded could be applied. Further investigation into dairy, forestry, and wider agriculture and horticultural models would be beneficial to identify if there are any opportunities for shared learning and/or cross-sector support, that could be funded by a national, centralised body. “Institutions are good at getting funding, doing the administration, and knowing how to access pastoral care – can this be leveraged?”

Further work on recognition of training and fit-for-purpose micro-credentials is an area that is identified as requiring support. Transparency and promotion of the New Zealand-Australia agreement for recognition of learning are also required. Creation of a portable, contemporary record of learning/digital CV, including digital badging to enable movement that reflects the transient nature of the role is agreed upon as a necessary next step.

## **6. What potential educational and training offerings would, therefore, underpin an effective workforce development model?**

For industry it is identified that the following elements would provide an effective training offering:

- Regional offerings
- Practical, hands-on, specialist, in-shed training for all levels
- The residential component, followed by in-work experience
- Holistic approach, life skills, financial skills, movement, nutrition
- Pastoral care wrap-around support
- Embedded cultural approach: vision and values, awareness and confidence
- A tiered approach (beginner, intermediate, advanced) including upskilling and competition level training
- A digital platform, using videos, to support and enable training
- Fit-for-purpose micro-credentials to recognise training completed – adapting the NZ settings to fit workforce needs
- Digital CV, including digital badging for recognition and portability – informal credentials
- A transparent, national pathway, that could be linked to an Australian pathway, including mutual recognition opportunity
- A nationally cohesive promotional strategy, which is underpinned by the ‘rural athlete’ approach, and shares pathways, opportunities, and success stories.

## **7. What attraction and retention approaches have been seen to be effective or ineffective?**

Several features in both the WOMOlife and Elite Wool Industry Training models have been seen as effective in reference to the attraction and retention of trainees. These include the

residential nature, as well as the tiered approach, particularly with upskilling the existing workforce. The clear career pathway mapped out through the tiers is very popular.

All trainees on the WOMOLife beginner and upskill training courses, for example, have currently remained in the industry.

The emergent pathway for youth into the new entrants' programme has been successful in engaging trainees who are predominantly in school. Making better use of system settings at the secondary-tertiary-employment interface will help strengthen the pipeline. Many of these trainees have succeeded in gaining further opportunities for fundraisers, seasonal work, and placement with contractors.

Using a digital media platform, including videos, has been seen as an effective way to attract and retain people in the industry. It was noted that the use of more case studies of mentors, and people to aspire to as well as good news stories would be beneficial.

Using targeting segments has also been effective, for example, youth-promoting to youth and profiling respected women in the industry. An example is using trainees from rugby clubs in Hawke's Bay for raising awareness and the profile of the training. These trainees were highly visible in their sports teams, were respected, and performed very well in the woolshed. More work with youth, and youth in agricultural training programmes, as well as wider school, is needed.

It was identified that fees-free reduces barriers to entry and is effective at accessing those at a regional level who would not otherwise be in training or work. Work on better funding to fund responsive, regionally focused short courses to attract people into a learning pathway would further address this nationally.

**Further suggestions were provided for increasing attraction and retention:**

Working together as an industry for a common goal is seen as an immediate need and important to raise the profile of the industry.

***“The [wool harvesting] industry doesn’t promote itself well and needs to do more. There needs to be a mindset shift from trainers, contractors, and farmers.”***

The industry needs the workforce capability for wool quality and requires a nationally cohesive approach to promotion, attraction, and retention. “There is a need for a strong wool (cross-bred) capability to support fine-wool capability – they need to work together.”

The creation of a clear and transparent pathway nationally (no matter the provider) is required. The pathway is there, however, requires more visibility, promotion, and a funding solution. There is an opportunity to elevate and empower those in leading hand positions to mentor new entrants into training pathways.

Promotion of earning potential and tying it to training would be beneficial in attracting and retaining those in the wool industry. Shearers can increase their pay per sheep, by increased

skills and ability. Wool handlers are paid hourly and some are also recognised for increased skills. It is a well-paid summer job and easy for agriculture students to transition into. Nevertheless, more could be done around employment conditions to lift attractiveness.

There is an ability to travel and earn well, which also addressed continuity of employment. Promote “follow the sheep” as a positive. If you are prepared to travel, the seasons don’t matter as much. This includes highlighting the opportunity of working in New Zealand, Australia, the UK and Ireland, and beyond.

Some of the hard work, early starts, and the overall nature of the roles that may deter people can be reframed through the ‘rural athlete’ promotion. The attractiveness of competition events and national team selection is another incentive. Again, there is an opportunity to make the most of good stories, those with awards, and capture the passion of the industry.

More could be done to investigate initiatives to address rural and urban audiences as the industry has changed significantly. In the 1970-80s, it was believed there would have been a shearing gang in any sizeable town, however, New Zealand has steadily urbanised. This means that recruits into the industry are not necessarily coming from farming or shearing families anymore, so there is a need to target urban areas too.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND HIGH-LEVEL OBSERVATIONS**

1. The Wool Harvesting industry in New Zealand appears to have many of the necessary ingredients required for a robust and fit-for-purpose training model. Overall, there is unanimity on what is effective in terms of training delivery. Many expressed that the industry has known and clearly articulated, the model and modes of delivery that are most effective for many years now, and it is the funding and the qualification structures that do not support these.
2. The demise of the Wool Board and the Levy-funded system that enabled training for over sixty years has been seen as a huge loss and subsequently affected training and quality right throughout the supply chain and resulting in a skills shortage. The intervening government-funded industry training models have not been a successful replacement for the wool harvesting industry.
3. Overall, there is renewed optimism and the desire for a training solution that encompasses regionally responsive, short, residential delivery, utilising a digital platform and a holistic approach. There is a low appetite for a return to an industry training model. Previously linking funding to employers and apprenticeship models has been seen as unsuccessful due to the expected reality of an itinerant workforce.
4. It was expressed that it would be a disservice to the industry not to review a funded and recognised/credentialled model in addition to a user-pays model.
5. The user-pays model has challenges in terms of attraction, retention, and viability. Currently, there is no wider wool industry contribution to the cost of training shearers and shed staff which is integral to the overall supply chain.
6. Challenges include the necessary itinerancy of the workforce. Traveling between employers, regions, and countries is a necessity for continuous employment, thus

businesses that directly bear the cost of training staff, perceive they struggle to get a return on that investment.

7. There is a reasonable amount of training being delivered and (with the exception of using a digital platform) there are many similarities in how that training is delivered. The main difference is largely how the training models are funded.
8. Qualifications and micro-credentials are not currently subscribed to. For these to be effective training products the education and training system settings will have to adapt to the sector rather than the other way around.
9. It is clear that learnings from the Wool Board model, which was well respected domestically and internationally, have been identified and implemented into the current training offerings. This includes the structured tiered approach, the residential training element, and the practical applied technical nature of training. Additionally, the holistic approach to training such as movement and nutrition continues successfully in current offerings.
10. Additional training features include the addition of more cultural and pastoral care features such as life skills, financial skills, and anti-bullying. The main difference in training delivery offered in New Zealand currently is using a digital platform to enable and enhance the delivery (WOMOlifemodel).
11. It is worth noting that online resources are used by Elite Wool Industry Training and Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ (Tahi Ngātahi) as well. The content across all of the systems in use could easily be integrated into a common digital platform. It was widely acknowledged that overall, whilst there could be an ongoing improvement in content, this has been very successful at both attracting and retaining trainees.
12. The most significant areas of issue are funding (as an enabler of training), appropriate qualifications (informal and formal), recognition of training, and pastoral care support. The pastoral care support needs to be more accessible and include support for alcohol and drug awareness and addiction.
13. There is some concern regarding the intention and scope of the Wool Impact group. The strategy and operational model are unknown and the potential fragmentation and duplication of effort and progression in the education and training space are seen as a risk.

## **Lessons for the next stage:**

Further investigation into the following areas is required:

- A potential trans-Tasman model (SWOT)
- Appropriate recognition of training and fit-for-purpose micro-credentials
- Digital badging
- Clear articulation of a training model and pathways, and a pipeline at a national level
- Funding mechanisms as an enabler of training including industry-led user pays and blended funding options

- Reframing the education and training system settings to suit the workforce and industry operational model
- A pipeline from secondary school into the industry – make better use of the secondary-tertiary-employment interface
- Test if the model developed for wool harvesting has wider applicability in the Food and Fibre sector.

## **PART TWO: SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

### **Next Steps**

This project offers an opportunity to determine what an effective workforce development model looks like for the Wool Harvesting sector. Most importantly it enables the sector to support the overall wool sector with a sustainable supply of shearers, wool handlers, and wool classers.

This Situational Assessment provides an agreed context to and understanding of effective training delivery modes and the preferred training model.

The following is an outline of a workforce development strategy and the options regarding the next steps for the design and implementation.

A further interest of the FFCoVE through this project is the potential for broader applicability across the food and fibre sector and VET in general.

### **Workforce Development Strategy**

The Situational Assessment indicates the Wool Harvesting industry in New Zealand has the fundamental elements needed for a 'fit-for-purpose' workforce development model. It is also clear from the report that there is passion and collective understanding around what makes for effective training for the industry.

The industry has recognised the happy coincidence of new provision stimulating employer and learner demand and optimism, government reforms (RoVE), and fiscal stimulation. This is providing a short window of opportunity to design and implement an effective and sustainable workforce development solution.

Although the timing may be opportune, the industry is also aware of the significant and ingrained barriers that will need to be addressed. A legacy of decline in strong wool, training delivery, and leadership fragmentation including deep scepticism toward government-funded industry training models, and delivery that struggles for viability.

Lastly, it is important to note that a workforce development strategy includes wool classing and grading along with shearing and wool handling.

Therefore, a successful strategy must be systemic and coherent and work for employers, trainees, and the wool industry overall.



## A Possible Framework

The purpose is for an industry-led strategy to establish a sustainable workforce development solution. It must meet the needs of the wool industry in the long term and will provide clear expectations and opportunities for customised provision. Six requirements frame this strategy:

- Effective training course delivery
  - Regionally responsive, short residential hands-on, in-shed practical training modules
  - Utilising a digital platform
  - Includes holistic features such as cultural and pastoral care, life skills, financial skills, anti-bullying, drug, and alcohol safety
  - Includes a kaupapa Māori environment
  - Viable funding and appropriate recognition of training through tiered fit-for-purpose credentials.
  
- Pipeline and pathways from secondary school into the industry
  - Makes effective use of the formal system at the secondary-training interface
  - Caters for both new-entrant and beginner-level
  - Clear articulation of pathways, training, and employment opportunities.
  
- Provision/delivery must meet industry variables such as
  - Itinerancy and need for continuous employment
  - Employers need to have workers available
  - Seasonality
  - Shared workforce opportunities with other sectors/industries/regions/countries.
  
- Attraction and retention
  - New-entrant pipeline and ongoing training and progression pathways
  - Collaborative wool promotion – e.g., natural and environmentally friendly, fashion and design for both strong and fine wool products
  - Athlete status and competitions – international as well as domestic
  - Offshore employment and travel opportunities.
  
- System models - choices and opportunities
  - The education and training system adapts to the industry and employer-preferred training model rather than the reverse
  - Using the non-formal user-pays credentials and adapting the education and training system to fit these, to meet industry needs across the talent pipeline
  - An industry-led trans-Tasman model with Australia Wool Innovation (AWI) and Shearing Contractors' Association of Australia (SCAA).
  
- Collaboration and partnerships
  - Particularly amongst key stakeholders in the wool supply chain
  - Industry investment for industry-led user-pays models

- Partnerships will be necessary to enable shared workforces and blended system models
- The roles of the main industry associations for fine wool and strong wool in determining and supporting a preferred training model.

## Design Options

The design options revolve around how the funding and credentials decisions can best meet the industry requirements. The fundamental choices are public funding, industry and employer investment, and learner user pays or a blend of two of these or all three. Some examples of design considerations:

- Many contractors appear to favour a user pays model as the way to get the delivery model they want. They are also not convinced of the value of the formal industry training model and find formal qualifications are not a good match with industry realities or their preferred approach to delivery.
- Pipeline development at the secondary-training interface might be best managed through productive collaboration with secondary schools.
- What would a training environment that would best enable kaupapa Māori opportunities look like?
- Wool classing appears to be getting stronger under the Wool Technology programme delivered online. This is a public-funded qualification. This qualification is credible to members of the wool trade supply chain.
- The structured, tiered non-formal credential mode (e.g., the Seals) and digital-badging offer good products for an industry-led user pays option.
- For the new VET qualifications - micro-credentials and skills standards to be effective training products, the education system settings will have to adapt to the sector.
- What are the feasible options for sustainable industry investment?

## Broader applicability

The FFCoVE objective to consider broader applicability across the Food and Fibre and wider VET sectors cannot be conducted with any degree of certainty. While wider possibilities may be deduced from what has been learned in the Situational Analysis and Assessment it would be speculative to reach any conclusions without the deeper dive suggested in the next steps below.

The same applies to the objective to assess the options against the FFCoVE's vocational excellence framework and the new RoVE settings. It is clear from the findings in the report that more work will be necessary to be able to make these assessments.

### Proposed next steps:

1. Determine the system model that best fits and/or enables industry and employer requirements to be met.
2. Further investigate and articulate design options and costs of delivery to enable industry requirements to be met and implemented.
3. Work in partnership with Māori to ensure the preferred system model and its design features provide for a kaupapa Māori environment.
4. Identify the necessary collaborations and partnerships that will give effect to the operational requirements.
5. Ensure effective communication with key system players in the wool industry and education about objectives and industry requirements.
6. Develop a business case for a project proposal to design and develop a preferred system model.

### The Steering Group

Following its review of the Situational Analysis and Assessment paper, the Steering Group made the following recommendations for the attention of the FFCoVE, and the Skills Consulting Group Project Team.

The Steering Group:

- a) Endorses the findings and next steps outlined in the Situational Analysis and Assessment paper and is insistent they are acted on with urgency.
- b) Recognises these next steps are not an exclusive set of possible actions, therefore giving the mandate to explore other options.
- c) Emphasises that it is vital the education and training system takes the lead from industry as to the preferred training delivery model for wool harvesting.
- d) Mandates the FFCoVE and SCG to explore the three identified system models both as a collective package and alternatively as separate options.
- e) Notes that a government-funded model is the preferred option, but it may be necessary to consider blended funding options as well.
- f) Mandates the FFCoVE and SCG to develop a project proposal and business case for the next phase to provide an operational solution for the training model and talent pipeline.

# APPENDIX

## 1. Research interview list

The research methodology was qualitative. This included using stakeholder interviews to form part of the report. The following organisations, businesses, and representatives were interviewed. In some cases, two individuals from one organisation may have been interviewed, where there were different roles held.

- NZ Wool Classers Association (3)
- NZ Shearing Contractors Association
- Woolwright Group
- Woolworks NZ
- Woolscourers NZ
- Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ
- D & G Consulting
- Greater Christchurch Schools' Network
- Leadership Lab
- Mullins Shearing
- Smith Shearing
- Munro Shearing
- MJ Barrowcliffe Shearing Ltd
- Farmer, Shearer, Wool Tutor at Southern Institute of Technology (SIT)
- Mt Somers Station
- Emerald Farms
- Federated Farmers
- Industry Expert: Ex-Wool Board (2)
- Tararua Shearing Ltd
- WOMOlife Wool Industry Training (2)
- Elite Wool Industry Training
- Primary ITO

## 2. Key terms

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Formal Learning</b>	Learning that takes place through a structured program of instruction which is generally recognised by the attainment of a formal qualification or award (for example, a certificate, diploma, or degree).
<b>Informal Learning</b>	Informal learning is learning that just happens with no assigned credit value and no certification of achievement. Examples include on-the-job training through buddying with a more experienced worker, guidance via a mentoring system, self-education, 'school of hard knocks' through multiple years of doing the job, etc.
<b>Non-Formal Learning</b>	Non-formal learning includes industry-developed and assured in-house training, badging, and seals along with industry recognised

	and purchased vendor training as well as compliance training. These credentials are not registered on the NZQF although some may have an acknowledged equivalence by formal training providers e.g., towards specified or unspecified credits against a formal qualification.
<b>Industry Training</b>	On and off-job learning to develop competence in a role.
<b>Informal Industry Training</b>	Industry outside of formal workplaces and learning providers.
<b>Vocational Education and Training (VET)</b>	Formal learning to develop skills and know-how relating to employment opportunities and occupations, delivered via some combination of institution-based or work-based learning.
<b>Work-based Learning (WBL)</b>	Learning that occurs in a work environment, through participation in work practice and process, and is integral to vocational education and training (VET).
<b>Work-integrated Learning (WIL)</b>	Learning is comprised of a range of programs and activities in which the theory of the learning is intentionally integrated with the practice of work through a specifically designed curriculum, pedagogic practices, and student engagement.
<b>Workplace Learning</b>	Learning or training undertaken in the workplace, usually on the job, including on-the-job training under normal operational conditions, and on-site training, which is conducted away from the work process (e.g., in a training room).

### 3. Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACC	Accident Compensation Corporation
AWI	Australia Wool Innovation
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Student
ENZ	Education New Zealand
EPI	Education Performance Indicator
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FFCoVE	Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence
FT	Fixed Term
FTE	Full-time Equivalent(s) ( <i>a unit of staffing entitlement</i> )
GAN	Global Apprenticeship Network

ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ITO	Industry Training Organisation
ITR	Industry Training Register
LLN	Literacy, Language, and Numeracy
MBIE	Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
NCEA	National Certificate of Educational Achievement
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoP	Mix of Provision
MPTT	Māori & Pasifika Trades Training
MSD	Ministry for Social Development
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSI	National Student Index
NSN	National Student Number
NZA	New Zealand Apprenticeship
NZCER	New Zealand Council for Educational Research
NZG2G	New Zealand Government to Government
NZTE	New Zealand Trade and Enterprise
NZEI	New Zealand Educational Institute
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
NZQF	New Zealand Qualification Framework
NZSCED	New Zealand Standard Classification of Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health Service
PBRF	Performance-Based Research Fund
PD	Professional Development
PGF	Provincial Growth Fund
PTE	Private Training Establishment
ROA	Record of Achievement
ROL	Record of Learning
RoVE	Reform of Vocational Education
RTO	Registered Training Organisation (Australia only)
SAC	Student Achievement Component
SCAA	Shearing Contractors' Association of Australia
SDR	Single Data Return
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SLS	Supplementary Learning Support

SMS	Student Management System
SOI	Statement of Intent
STAR	Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
STM	Standard Training Measure
TAFE	Technical and Further Education (Australia only)
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
TEI	Tertiary Education Institution
TEO	Tertiary Education Organisations
TES	Tertiary Education Strategy
TITO	Transitional Industry Training Organisations
TTAF	Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund (Free Trades Training)
TWC	The Woolmark Company
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WDC	Workforce Development Councils
WBL	Work-based Learning
WPL	Workplace Literacy and Numeracy
YG	Youth Guarantee Fund