



## President's Comment 3

18th February 2010

### **From the SPANZ Office**

*This week you will be receiving by mail voting forms and profiles for the election of the 2010 SPANZ Executive. We have also included a copy of the 2010 Symposium Brochure and Registration Form for those of you who have not yet registered.*

Dear Colleagues

I think all would agree that the presentation of NCEA data on the NZQA website is vastly improved, being more user friendly and useful. The change to a participation-based denominator for showing the percentages of students gaining qualifications as compared to the previous roll-based one provides a more realistic basis for comparison. However, we must make sure to convert previous years' data to the new denominator when preparing annual reports or other reports to our Boards.

The range of comparative data that can be accessed at a push of a button is impressive, if not a little overwhelming, and there is no doubt that the sheer volume of NCEA data can lead to confusion for interest groups, the media and even ERO teams. For several years I have been advocating for the earlier publication of the 'benchmark indicators' by the Ministry. This data would be most useful NCEA data if it was produced in a more timely manner because it describes what qualifications the whole cohort of school leavers in any one year have gained. With a building block type qualification like NCEA surely this is the one bit of data that can be used as a basis of comparison from one year to the next and used for specific improvement targets. Successive Ministers of Education and the current Prime Minister have often stated that NCEA level 2 should be regarded as a minimum leaving qualification. If it is regarded as so important why not provide schools with that information at an early stage in the year – receiving it late in October/early November is of little use. With ENROL now firmly established I cannot see any reason why NCEA results for our school leaver cohort could not be provided to schools by the end of March.

Maybe we will then see a cessation to the publication of year 11, level 1 NCEA results as a measure of NCEA success. Such results are fairly meaningless in the big picture and possibly represent a fixation by some to School Certificate days. We have moved on.

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President

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