

# PeopleGPS

**PeopleGPS** is the four day short course to assist dairy farmers with recruiting, retaining and developing people on their farm.

## Context

People issues on dairy farms play a critical role in determining whether farmers get to where they want to be in the industry - whether it is running an operation that attracts and retains the right people, achieving a better work/life balance or being capable of continued business growth.

*PeopleGPS* was developed in collaboration with the National Centre for Dairy Education Australia, and maps to the Level V unit *RTE5807A Manage Staff*.

It was designed based on experiences of farmers in 11 People Focus Discussion Groups run in 2007-08.

## About the course

The course is run by NCDEA (and alliance partners) over four days. Trainers all have completed the Diploma Human Resource Management (Dairy).

The enrolment cost to participants has been subsidised by industry to be approximately \$300.

The course focuses on a case study farm to explore issues around:

- Recruitment
- Safety procedures and protocols
- Compliance with Industrial Relations laws and awards
- Performance appraisals
- Termination of employees
- Working with other people
- Planning for the future

Farmers attending the course practise using the online resources to create a set of employment documents and action plan for their farm.

## Outcomes

Over 200 farmers have participated so far in *PeopleGPS* and the precursor People Focus Discussion Groups.

Feedback on the course has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants indicating that the skills learned on the course will directly assist their current and future roles (see overpage).

Participants get most value from the online resources and discussions of other people's experiences. By the end of the course many farmers intend to:

- Use the online resources to develop standard operating procedures and safety protocols.
- Write a code of conduct and employment contracts.
- Help improve the working relationships of the farm team, deal with conflicts and conduct performance appraisals.

## Program learning

Experience with the People Focus Discussion Groups highlighted the need for 'learning by doing' with the opportunity to discuss issues with other farmers.

The discussion groups also showed how difficult it is for (even highly experienced) farm consultants to facilitate sessions on people management without having training and support - especially around Industrial Relations.



TPiD area	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farm
TPiD objective	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farmers are effectively using people resources in their farm business
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farms attract and retain the people they need
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farms comply with legal requirements & have a low business risk around their people resource
Enabling environment	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Industry has agreed terminology, conceptual frameworks and core resources for best practice
Audience	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Farmers

**“Very good- well worth attending as it opens your eyes to everything that is involved in employing someone.”**

-Farmer participant at the *PeopleGPS* Warragul, 2011

**PeopleGPS from 2010-2012**

Region	Workshops	Participants	Score*
Gippsland	2	19	5.4
Northern Victoria	5	40	5.7
Western Victoria	5	38	5.7
NSW	1	11	5.4
QLD	1	n/a	n/a
SA	1	17	5.7
Tasmania	1	9	6.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>5.7</b>

*\*The skills I've learned will assist me in my current work role and/or future roles: score between 1 (unacceptable) to 6 (excellent).*

**Feedback to NCDEA evaluation from 56 participants**

