

AUSTRALIAN *FLEXIBLE LEARNING* FRAMEWORK

Managed by the Flexible Learning Advisory Group on behalf of all States and Territories in conjunction with ANTA

# 2002 RTO Case Study Project 'Flexible learning in practice'

## Yellow Cabs (Qld) Pty Ltd



Operator Accreditation

29 November 2002

## RTO Case Study Foreword

The following case study is one of 18 case studies that document the use and application of Australian Flexible Learning (AFL) Framework products and services by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). The case studies are an initiative of the AFL Framework for the National Vocational Education and Training System 2000 – 2004 as a means of offering 'real-life' examples of how RTOs are implementing elearning strategies with the assistance of AFL Framework products and services. Each participating RTO has documented their experiences over a six month period (June 2002 to November 2002) and have been selected from each State and Territory representing the TAFE, Private Provider, Enterprise and VET in Schools sectors.

**Each case study will provide you with an insight into how RTOs are implementing flexible learning and is critical reading if:**

- You are interested in finding out about the possibilities of flexible learning
- You are currently implementing flexible learning within your organisation
- You are looking to extend your flexible learning delivery capabilities

**Each case study covers areas such as;**

- How to implement AFL Framework products and services
- Change management practices
- Customisation of flexible learning products and services
- Professional development
- Access and equity considerations
- Flexible learning strategic planning
- Blended learning techniques
- Marketing and much more.

Each case study highlights the various ways in which AFL Framework products and services can be applied to the learning environment to enhance client delivery and service.

For further information pertaining to AFL Framework products and services or to access other case studies visit [discover.flexiblelearning.net.au](http://discover.flexiblelearning.net.au) or phone 07 3234 1852.

Copyright:

© 2002 Australian National Training Authority

This work has been produced with the assistance of funding provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Australian National Training Authority. Copyright for this document vests in ANTA. ANTA will allow free use of the material so long as ANTA's interest is acknowledged and the use is not for profit

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.0 FLEXIBLE LEARNING BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Background.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>The RTO.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<b>WHY DEVELOP A NEW COURSE FOR THE TAXI INDUSTRY? .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>OPERATOR ACCREDITATION FLOWCHART .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.0 GETTING STARTED – SELECTING THE RIGHT AUSTRALIAN FLEXIBLE LEARNING FRAMEWORK PRODUCTS AND SERVICES .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>FlexWays.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Staff Capability Review Approaches .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<b>3.0 PUTTING FLEXIBLE LEARNING INTO PRACTICE WITH AFL FRAMEWORK PRODUCTS AND SERVICES!.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>FlexWays and Staff Capabilities.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<b>BENEFITS GAINED THROUGH USING AFL FRAMEWORK PRODUCTS AND SERVICES .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>FlexWays.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<b>4.0 HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF AFL FRAMEWORK PRODUCTS AND SERVICES ...</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>FlexWays.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Staff Capability Review Approaches .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<b>5.0 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>15</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The taxi industry has been transformed by technology. From the customer booking a taxi to the company dispatching one, the industry has progressed from personal operators to complete computer operation. Yellow Cabs recognised the need to move its training operations from the restrictions of a classroom to the wide reaching spectrum of flexible learning. The AFL Framework products and services case study offered Yellow Cabs the opportunity to become client and technology focused.

This case study outlines Yellow Cabs experience in developing an operator accreditation course using Australian Flexible Learning (AFL) Framework products and services. An industry based registered training organisation (RTO), Yellow Cabs focuses on issues that currently challenge the industry. Although taxi operator accreditation is compulsory under Queensland Government legislation, no RTO has developed an accredited course for the taxi industry.

The Yellow Cabs course will set a benchmark for course content and create the opportunity to influence and enhance the quality and professionalism of the industry overall. This will be achieved by offering information targeted at the passive investor, licence owner operators as well as offering a career path for present and future drivers.

### **AFL Products and Services**

To assist in reaching the objectives, Yellow Cabs used the following three AFL Framework Products and services:

- 1) Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework allowed for strategic direction and planning,
- 2) FlexWays assisted in the design and structure of the course, and
- 3) Staff Capability Review Approaches identified staff skills.

The use of the AFL Framework products and services targeted two broad areas:

- 1) Improving the overall strategic direction, business objectives, marketing orientation and support strategies. Marketing the course to industry participants as well as web advertisers was a key priority.
- 2) The recognition and utilisation of existing staff capabilities and inhouse resources before making any attempt to outsource.

As a direct result of participating in this case study, Yellow Cabs has moved from being a classroom based RTO to delivering training in a flexible learning environment.

After developing the course content, Yellow Cabs is currently in the process of developing its online training site, which will be ready for testing within the next few months. By using the AFL Framework products and services, Yellow Cabs has realised that by pooling its available in-house resources and with a clear vision of the task at hand much can be achieved in a short space of time.

For any company looking to venture into flexible learning, Yellow Cabs can highly recommend using the three AFL Framework products and services it selected to achieve their goals.

# 1.0 Flexible Learning Background

## Background

Yellow Cabs was established in 1924 and continues to lead the taxi industry. The organisation focuses on providing excellence in customer service, however the ever-changing industry makes it increasingly more difficult.

The industry consists of several key stakeholders who each enter the industry differently:

### Taxi drivers:

- Are the people that the public identify with.
- Hire or rent the vehicle under a contract of bailment from an owner or lessee either for a percentage of the total fares taken or alternatively for a set fee.
- Require a current drivers licence, and the successful completion of a taxi driving course. (A taxi driver's licence is called a Drivers Authorisation "D.A.")



**Taxi bookings before computers**

### Taxi Licence Owners:

- Own the taxi service licence that the taxi vehicle operates under. (To own a Taxi Service Licence requires a substantial capital investment dependant on the taxi service area to which it is licenced).
- Can operate a taxi vehicle themselves and be actively involved in the industry (owner operator).
- Can lease the licence out for a monthly fee (passive investor).
- Can own more than one licence.
- Can rent the vehicle to a taxi driver under a contract of bailment for a percentage of takings or a fixed fee.

### Lessee Operators:

- Are taxi drivers taking their first step to owning their own taxi vehicle.
- Enter into a lease contract with an owner of a taxi licence for a monthly fee over a fixed term. (To lease a licence requires capital outlay for the purchase of a vehicle which meets the conditions of the taxi service licence).
- Drive the vehicle themselves and can rent the vehicle to a taxi driver under a contract of bailment for a percentage of takings or fixed fee
- May operate one or more leases. Multiple lease operators are termed fleet operators.

### Taxi Companies:

- Provide telephone booking service.
- Provide radio communication/data dispatch.
- Provide an account base.
- Provide a consultancy.
- Provide marketing and promotion.
- Provide assistance in entering the industry.

- Provide driver training.

#### **Taxi Council of Queensland:**

- Represents the whole of the taxi industry in its interests as a collective voice in dealing in matters which affect the industry as a whole (e.g. Local, State or Federal Government).

#### **Queensland Transport:**

- Regulates the industry through a specific Act.
- Enforces legislation which controls the industry.

In years past, legislation restricted the number of licences an individual could operate. Owners were also required to actively drive and manage their taxi or taxis. This made the service quality easy to control. In 1994, the Act governing the taxi industry was revised and this restriction was amended.

This change allowed new investors into the industry with little or no knowledge of its operation. These investors began leasing their taxi service licences to the highest bidder which created new problems for the industry. Lessee operators were not sufficiently trained or educated on the requirements of operating a taxi both safely and successfully.

#### **The RTO**

Initially, Yellow Cabs ran a one hour orientation course followed by a visit to the Department of Transport to sit a location test and driving assessment. For first time applicants, the failure rate under this system was about 90%. Drivers were required to know their way around the city, be proficient in using a two-way radio, have basic mechanical skills, and show proper customer service etiquette etc.

Yellow Cabs' training school established in the 70s saw this failure drop to 10%. This training has developed into the introduction of the Taxicare Program in the early 90s, to the Queensland developed Taxiplus Program in 1996.

In this training, Yellow Cabs reviewed the following units of competence contained in the Transport and Distribution Training Package (TDT) which was required by Queensland Transport to obtain a taxi driver's licence:

- Drive Taxi Cabs (TDT C9 97)
- Transport Passengers With Disabilities (TDT C11)
- Follow Occupational Health and Safety Procedures (TDT F1 97)
- Apply Customer Service Skills (TDT I2 97)
- Apply Quality Procedures (TDT J1 97)

To train drivers more professionally, Yellow Cabs took the initiative to add the following units of competence to its training course and deliver a Certificate II in Road Transport:

- Complete Induction Procedures (TDT L1 97)
- Drive Vehicles (Core Skills) (TDT C1 97)
- Conduct Housekeeping Activities (TDT F2 97)
- Participate in Workplace Communications (TDT E3 97)
- Carry Out Workplace Calculations (TDT E5 97)
- Carry Out Vehicle Inspection (TDT B4 97)
- Apply Fatigue Management Strategies (TDT F10 97)
- Conduct Financial Transactions (TDT Q1 97)
- Interpret Road Maps and Navigate Routes (TDT H1 97)
- Use Technology in the Workplace (TDT K5 97)

Yellow Cabs' decision to gain RTO status and expand the course by offering a Certificate II in Road Transport (new driver training) provided the company, its associates and the general public with enormous benefits in business growth and customer service. Yellow Cabs' RTO status means that the company retains a stake in the industry by providing competent, professional, and customer-focused drivers.

All courses – new driver training (Certificate II in Road Transport), Maxi Taxi and Silver Service – are currently run in a classroom environment from the depot in Woolloongabba, Brisbane. Additional training courses are held on Brisbane's northside at Herston and Virginia, Brisbane's southside in Logan City, and the eastside at Capalaba provide potential drivers easy access to training facilities. Day, night and weekend courses have also been made available.

In the future, Yellow Cabs aim to provide existing courses in a flexible learning mode to widen the potential driver base.

### **Why develop a new course for the taxi industry?**

Several problems hindered Yellow Cabs' quest for excellence in customer service. This case study has provided the opportunity for Yellow Cabs to improve the professionalism of drivers in the taxi industry.

Yellow Cabs' case study objective was to develop a new course "Operator Accreditation" in a flexible learning mode. They planned to include the investor, and the owner operator, while also offering a career path to drivers within the industry. For Yellow Cabs to address these sectors of the industry (which had not previously been catered for in training) required them to meet the demands of the ever-changing legislative environment.

The need to developing this course has come as a result of changes in Government regulations. Under Section 18(1) of the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Standard 2000, applicants for full operator accreditation must successfully complete a training course outlined in Section 14 of the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994.

To provide this training, Yellow Cabs has developed course content based on the three Transport and Distribution Training units of competency that Queensland Transport indicate are applicable to the taxi industry. Material provided to taxi investors and operators will assist this sector in meeting their statutory requirements.

The three units selected by Queensland Transport are:

1. Implement and Monitor Occupational Health and Safety Procedures (TDT F3 1997)
2. Apply Quality Procedures (TDT J1 1997)
3. Manage Fleet Control and Logistics (TDT L7 1997)

Currently, Queensland Transport has granted participants in the taxi industry provisional operator accreditation, without the need to undertake a training course. However, Queensland Transport randomly audits investors, taxi owners and operators to ensure their operations meet the requirements of competence.

The course will use these units of competence to achieve the objectives of providing knowledge of the industry and outlining responsibilities to the investor

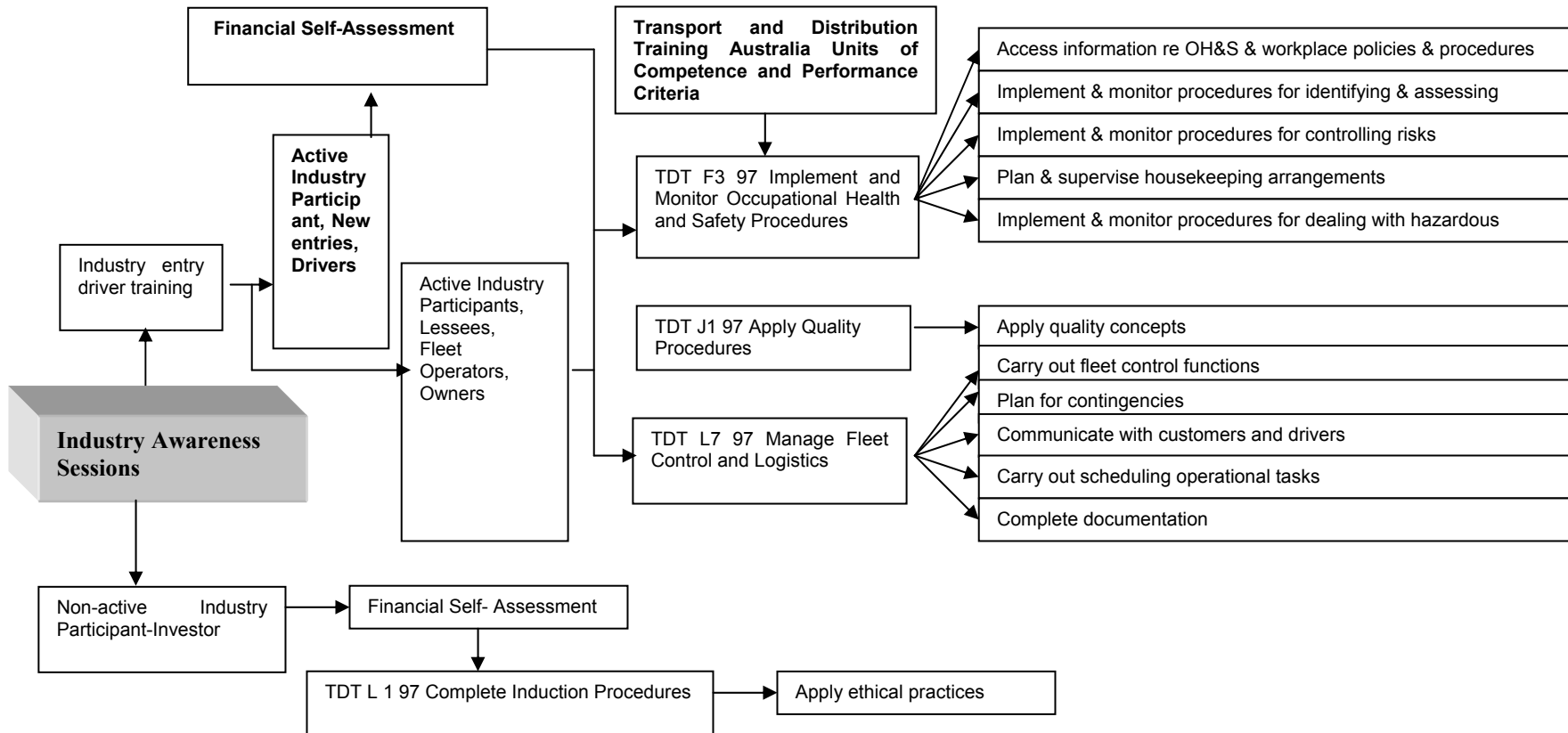
1. showing drivers that a career path and opportunity exists within the industry

2. providing knowledge of industry and outlining operational responsibilities required under the State Transport Act

Currently, no other RTO in Queensland offers this operator accreditation training. Yellow Cabs will be the first RTO to develop an operator accreditation course which will establish a benchmark for the taxi industry. The AFL Framework project has assisted Yellow Cabs to achieve this objective.

The following flowchart of Operator Accreditation details how modules within the course will interrelate to achieve this objective.

# Operator Accreditation Flowchart



## **2.0 Getting started – Selecting the right Australian Flexible Learning Framework products and services**

Yellow Cabs' aim focused on using the AFL Framework products and services to help them develop and deliver an operator accreditation course in flexible mode. Providing training online was aligned with the organisation's goal of improving the standards of the industry, attracting entrants as well as retaining those already in the industry, regardless of geographic location.

In designing a course for the industry, it was logical for the course to be developed by a taxi company. Three products from the AFL Framework assisted Yellow Cabs in developing the course:

### **The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework**

This product is designed to facilitate the effective development and delivery of sustainable flexible delivery solutions.

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework assists organisations in planning for the implementation of any management change associated with the implementation of flexible learning. It works through AFL Framework Business flowchart prompting business questions at every step.

### **FlexWays**

FlexWays is a web-based professional development planning resource for people working in Vocational Education and Training (VET) who want to develop their skills for a flexible learning environment.

FlexWays makes the user ask themselves questions on how will they do this i.e. What support does a flexible learning environment require from teaching staff? This evaluation in turn assisted with the development of questions to be included in the Staff Capabilities questionnaires.

### **Staff Capability Review Approaches**

This is a research report on cross sector experiences by organisations on the development of staff capabilities in flexible learning.

The report assists in analysing the attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills of staff in providing flexible learning services and in using technologies to achieve business objectives.

## **3.0 Putting flexible learning into practice with AFL Framework products and services!**

Yellow Cabs used the AFL Framework products and services in the following ways.

### **Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework**

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework asked questions which encouraged Yellow Cabs to think about their organisational structure and strategic measures. This

ensured that Yellow Cabs adopted a flexible learning environment and course content which was in line with their company's aim and mission statements.

Although a large market exists for the operator accreditation course, its success depends on its acceptance and recognition within the industry. To ensure this success, industry stakeholders were invited to be part of an operator accreditation steering committee to provide direction and credibility to the course. Representatives from Queensland Transport, the Industry Training Advisory Board, the Taxi Council of Queensland, and a Regional Taxi Company Director formed the committee.

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework also ensured that high level management was aware of Yellow Cabs' requirements for flexible learning to be successful in the industry environment. Through this, management acknowledged that for Yellow Cabs to broaden business capability as an RTO, a flexible learning approach was essential.

### **FlexWays and Staff Capabilities**

These two AFL Framework products worked together.

FlexWays focused Yellow Cabs' attention on course design, assessment, and staff resources by using questions such as the following:

- Were existing staff available to fulfill the needs of a course delivered in a flexible learning mode?
- Was there a need to use consultants?
- What assessments were required for current staff capabilities?

FlexWays helped formulate the right questions to obtain the necessary information on key personnel. This helped them understand the knowledge and skills necessary and highlighted any weaknesses.

Yellow Cabs subsequently identified that course content and assessment could be written in-house, while outsourcing security and testing of the website. The legal requirements to ensure that information provided by those who undertake the course was not outside the framework of legislation would also be outsourced.

### **Benefits gained through using AFL Framework Products and Services**

#### **Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework**

Yellow Cabs was traditionally very focused on classroom delivery of courses. This Framework made adapting current courses for flexible delivery very attractive. Both the new course and current courses can be modified to enable easy posting to the internet in the future.

This Framework was essential to flexibly deliver a range of competencies from the Transport and Distribution Training package through a range of online mediums such as the internet, CD Rom etc.

Yellow Cabs needed to be strategically prepared for such an introduction. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework gave them the ability to evaluate its capabilities, market expectations, the benefits to industry, the benefits to the community, benefits to the company and the risks associated therewith. The management and staff involved in the case study were focused not only on the development of course material, but how it the company should approach its development, implementation and how it would be perceived by other industry participants.

As a result of having a clear framework and objectives to achieve, Yellow Cabs was able to identify additional information that would be required within the training course. The course was able to reach the investor, who previously have had no real knowledge of industry responsibilities, provide a career path for drivers, and assist owner operators to understand their operational responsibilities.

As a direct result of the strategy, all three sector participants will be able to make a conscious decision whether to commit further in their respective involvement within the industry. By addressing this element of the business, it clearly demonstrates how the taxi industry can be a lucrative business to be involved in.

### **FlexWays**

After using FlexWays and the Staff Capability Review Approaches, Yellow Cabs have lay the foundations to develop a database containing the skills, experience and education of every staff member. This will allow Yellow Cabs to look within its ranks when new positions and or projects arise, creating a greater business flexibility and capability.

FlexWays also led us to Toolbox Central, which was used to develop a Staff Capabilities checklist which helped brainstorm further capabilities.

As a whole, both products identified the following:

- The number of staff available for use in future endeavours.
- A greater knowledge of staffs skills and strengths.
- The company's ability to draw on the human assets of the company.
- Greater opportunity for promotion i.e. career path for staff, resulting in monetary savings.
- Possible reduction in outsourcing.

## **4.0 How to get the most out of AFL Framework products and services**

Before using any of the AFL Framework products and services, users must have a clear understanding of what is required to achieve and the timeline that is needed. Here's Yellow Cabs' general advice.

- Initiate a timeline, start with a finish date and work backwards.
- Detail when milestones are needed.
- Obtain full support from Management. Flexible learning in an organisation may be a new venture which may require changes which need management support for success.
- Know which staff and managers will be valuable sources of information (mentors).
- Meet regularly to monitor progress. The workload required to fulfill the AFL Framework products and services requirements may place additional work on staff involved.
- Take one tool at a time to direct the path needed to achieve the next.
- Work as a team.

Specific advice on the tools.

### **Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework**

- The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework is business focused and requires a managerial person.
- Work through all the sections of the example model.
  - organisational strategy
  - flexible delivery strategy - market readiness
  - supporting strategies – human resources, information technology
  - market perspective
  - provider perspective
- Remember that sections interrelate. Questions in the model pose questions from the provider's side. The other side asks a question from the market perspective.
- The Framework helps to identify areas for development.
- The benefit of this tool is to focus on the end goal.
- Users can track the progression easily through the flowchart.
- The plan flows on to the practical tool of FlexWays.

### **FlexWays**

- FlexWays is excellent for developers. It provides a wide range of resources to draw from in all areas of flexible learning.
- It provides a skills checklists, and professional development plans which are easily applied to personal and course development. These plans identify the right physical and human resources to access. It also provides a progress of plans which can be easily monitored and modified. It also allows several plans to be in operation at anytime.

### **Staff Capability Review Approaches**

- FlexWays and the Toolbox Central were used to develop a Staff Capability Skills Audit and identify the right staff.
- It is ideal for small business where multi-tasking is essential for day-to-day operations.
- It assists in identifying which staff require internal or external training and identifies gaps in staff training.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Yellow Cabs' participation in this case study has been a learning curve. Initially daunted and feeling unsure of what to expect or where to start, the AFL Framework tools made the start and the project easier.

This case study has allowed Yellow Cabs to realise that flexible learning for the industry is vital. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework demonstrates how this form of delivery can achieve greater results.

While Yellow Cabs had for some time seen the need to develop an operator accreditation course, this case study allowed it to happen.

AFL Framework products and services have an endless appeal. Yellow Cabs applied them to the new driver's Certificate II in Road Transport for online access, giving the opportunity to broaden the attraction of Yellow Cabs RTO to regional and central Queensland operators and drivers.

At this stage, the Yellow Cabs' RTO is focused on the taxi industry, but the possibility exists to expand by working in collaboration with other industries. The course developed will have foundations, common to other sectors of the transport industry and future opportunities exist to work with other organisations such as the trucking industry, or even call centres. Yellow Cabs' business options are now endless.

## 6.0 Acknowledgements

### Project Manager and Project Adoption Liaison Officer

Marty Ord – Yellow Cabs' Training Manager who's daily responsibilities include, ensuring the co-ordination and smooth running of the company's RTO as well as delivering training, daily traffic reports for local radio stations, organizing training sessions at affiliated taxi bases, and develops course content for our current driver training program.

The FlexWays and Staff Capabilities products were developed by Marty.

### Project Champion and Senior Manager

Judy Harper CPA – Yellow Cabs' Accountant oversees financial aspects of the company. Financial statement compilation to Business Activity Statements are all prepared and handled by the Accountant. Together the Accountant and her assistant developed a financial self-assessment, which will be incorporated within the Operator Accreditation Course.

### Project Co-ordinator

Karen Roberts – Yellow Cabs' Assistant Accountant duties include financial reporting and assisting the Accountant. Compiled Report aspect of Case Study.

Both Judy and Karen worked through the AFL Framework product, Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework.

### Web Development

Andrew Roberts – Yellow Cabs' Information Technology Officer

### Course Development and Strategic Direction

Bill Parker – Yellow Cabs' General Manager

### Course Development

Barry Jackson – Yellow Cabs' Work Place Health and Safety Officer/Information Technology Officer

Andrew Fannin – Yellow Cabs' Company Car Manager

### Steering Committee Members

Queensland Transport – Mike McLean, Senior Project Officer

Industry Training Advisory Board – Peter Leslie, Project Manager

Taxi Council of Queensland – Leonie Power

Ipswich Yellow Cabs – Barry Caldwell, Director