



TAFE teachers tour factories

EDUCATION
By SHANNON CRANE

MORE than 100 trades teachers from across the Riverina worked with Border businesses yesterday to give their teaching a boost.

The educators, from fields including engineering, automotive, construction and carpentry, visited workplaces in Albury and Wodonga as part of TAFE's World Class Skills Seminar.

Riverina Institute's head of trade studies David McCourt said the annual gathering helped the institute match the needs of businesses.

"We need to adapt our training to keep pace with the changes in different industries," he said.

"To do that, our teachers need to interact with people in industries to find out what issues are affecting them so they can modify their curriculums to best support local businesses."

The day began with a lecture from Institute for Trade Skills Excellence chief executive Brian Wexham.

Mr Wexham awarded Albury TAFE's automotive and certificate 3 in construction courses a two-gold-star rating for excellence.

Busloads of teachers then got a close look at how Wilson Transformer Company, Drivetrain Systems International, Joss Group and Huhtamaki operate.

"Individual businesses need individual training programs, it's no longer one size fits all," Mr McCourt said.

"Our teachers need to be trained by the businesses so we can make sure we satisfy all our clients."

Wilson Transformer occupational health and safety officer Shane Clark said he was able to highlight the company's specific training problems at yesterday's meeting.

"We're a competency-based company and we run 24 hours a day so we need flexible training options," he said.

"We need someone to come on site to train our staff out of business hours."

This year's visits focused on medium and large businesses.

● The Institute for Trade Skills Excellence chief executive Brian Wexham with Riverina TAFE teachers at the World Class Skills Seminar at Albury TAFE yesterday. Picture: KYLIE GOLDSMITH