THE NEW ZEALAND CENTRE FOR SME RESEARCH

MASSEY UNIVERSITY WELLMINGTON

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

“SUSTAINABLE SMEs – INFORMED BY RESEARCH”
2009 has been a significant year for the Centre, marking its tenth anniversary and cementing its position as the pre-eminent Centre for SME research in New Zealand. The year also brought the appointment of a new Director, Professor David Deakins, as well as the inclusion of a fulltime research assistant on the centre’s payroll.

The Centre’s founding Director, Professor Claire Massey, is still a Research Associate and has been appointed as the Head of the School of Management (see later).

Over the course of 2009 a number of projects and activities were undertaken by the New Zealand Centre for SME Research (NZSMERC). These are discussed below, categorised according to the Six Big Goals that Massey University is striving to achieve in its new Strategy, The Road to 2020.

These projects were in addition to the research that has been undertaken by individual researchers as part of their own research programmes – which is reflected in the publications section at the end of this document.

**RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

“We will promote the highest standards of research and scholarship and be a world leader in our areas of specialisation”.

Projects undertaken by the Centre in 2009 include:

**BusinessSMEasure the 3rd annual survey**

BusinessSMEasure is the Centre’s longitudinal research programme that aims to investigate how New Zealand small firms develop over time. 2009 was the third year that the Centre surveyed a panel of 1500 SMEs.

**R&D Perspectives of Small Firms**

This project was part of the 2008 BusinessSMEasure and was commissioned by the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology. The study formed part of a series of baseline studies that aimed to explore the understanding of, and the practices related to, R&D in small firms.

**Management Capability**

This project was funded by the Management Focus Fund and looked at how small firm owner-managers develop their managerial capability. Twenty-five growth-orientated small firm owner-managers were interviewed to explore the extent and nature of their managerial learning practices.

**Māori Businesses: Current Issues and Business Assistance Needs**

This project was funded by Poutama Business Trust and comprised a survey of 176 Māori businesses and 25 follow-up interviews with owner-managers. The project explored how owner-managers are coping with the economic downturn, the problems they are facing and the assistance they need to grow their business.

**SMEs and Sustainability**

This project was funded by the Massey University Research Fund. 50 interviews with small firm owner-managers were undertaken to explore how they define ‘sustainability’ as well as how they put it into practice.

**CONNECTIONS**

“We will strengthen our connections with local, national and international partners and stakeholder to gain mutually beneficial outcomes”.

**Overseas Visitors**

Visits by overseas researchers are an invaluable way of developing the networks of researchers based in New Zealand, as well as providing a practical mechanism for integrating New Zealand research with international studies. Visitors in 2009 included Dr Thomas M. Cooney, Research Fellow at the Dublin Institute of Technology and Director of the Institute for Minority Entrepreneurship (DIT), who was a key note speaker at the SEAANZ Conference.

**Visits Overseas**

The development of networks was also achieved by staff visiting international universities. Dr Martina Battisti, Deputy Director of the Centre, spent three and a half months at the Department of Economics at Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, where she participated in the Department’s research programme and worked collaboratively on the writing of research.

Associate Professor Martin Perry also spent time visiting overseas, at the School of Management, Queen’s University Belfast.
During his time in Ireland he undertook an interview-based survey of Irish trade associations to provide a matched sample to compare with New Zealand trade associations.

Professor David Deakins will be retaining a Visiting Professorship appointment at his former institution; the University of the West of Scotland.

SEANZ Conference
The 22nd annual conference of the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand was hosted by the Centre. Eighty delegates were attracted from a range of countries to contribute and share knowledge on small enterprise.

The conference was followed by a policy day, hosted by the NZSMERC in conjunction with the Ministry of Economic Development.

Winning of ICSB Bid
A bid led by Professor Claire Massey on behalf of the Centre to host the 2012 International Council for Small Business (ICSB) World Conference was successful. The forum normally brings together more than 500 participants from many regions of the world, with a desire to support the goals and objectives of ICSB. The Centre is already engaged in planning for the 2012 Conference, which will be held on the dates 11-13 June 2012 in Wellington; please mark these dates in your diary.

Stakeholder engagement
NZSMERC continued to engage with the business community and policy makers by contributing to a range of seminars, forums and panels. Some examples of this engagement are:

- Presenting at the 2009 Business Capability Partnership Colloquium.

- Presenting at the New Zealand Institute of Architects Country Series Seminar.

- Member of the Evaluation panel for Envirostep Business Assessment Tool, run by the Ministry of Economic Development.

- Judging for a number of Business Awards across the country.

- Prof. Claire Massey was the invited speaker at a policy workshop organised by the Egyptian government (through the Industrial Modernisation Centre) in Cairo, October 2009.

- Prof. Claire Massey was the invited speaker at the Small Business Summit held in Auckland September 2009.

Committee appointments
Associates of the Centre, assisted on a number of small business and entrepreneurship related committees. Including:

- Dr Jo Bensemann was invited to become a Trustee for the Ruapehu District Council’s Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO), Visit Ruapehu. She took up this three year appointment in May 2009.

- Both Dr Kate Lewis and staff member Allison Taranchokov have longstanding positions on the committee of the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand (SEAANZ), and in 2009 Dr Lewis was elected as a Vice-President.

Prof. Claire Massey
- Re-elected as Senior Vice-President of the International Council for Small Business, with responsibility for the conference programme.

- Chair of the Annual Conference of Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand (SEAANZ) held in Wellington September 2009.

- Continued to act as a member of the Steering Group for the Statistics New Zealand project Making Information Freely Available.

- Member of Steering Group for tote IRD research project on tax compliance.

- Member of Steering Group for the Cross-departmental research project (MED and IRD) on Capability & Compliance.

- Member of Open Polytechnic Advisory Board to the School of Business (with a special focus on small business).
People news

Congratulations are due to two of our Research Associates, Dr Joanne Bensemann and Dr Kate Lewis, who successfully defended their PhD’s in 2009. Dr Lewis was also a recipient of a Women’s Award at Massey University, a prize that enables staff involved in teaching or administrative work to take time out to write up research results for publication.

We are proud to share that Professor Anne de Bruin was rewarded a Fulbright New Zealand Senior Scholar Award in 2008, which she utilised over the four months leading up to February 2009 at the leading entrepreneurship research and teaching institution in the United States – Babson College in Boston.

It is with great pride that we also announce the appointment of Professor Claire Massey, former director of the Centre, to the role of Head of the School of Management, Massey University.

Staff Leaving the NZSMERC

We recently said farewell to Dr Banjo Roxas, who joined the centre as a Researcher in July. Banjo has taken up a position as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Southern Queensland.

Centre Research Associates

Wellington

Professor Claire Massey, Associate Professor Martin Perry, Dr Kate Lewis, Dr Louise Lee,
Dr Raja Peter.

Palmerston North/Manawatu

Dr Joanne Bensemann, Dr Sue Cassells,
Dr David Tweed.

Albany, Auckland

Professor Anne de Bruin, Dr Andrew Cardow,
Dr Sue Flint-Hartle, Dr Marco van Gelderen.

Centre Staff

Professor David Deakins - Director
Dr Martina Battisti - Deputy Director
Amanda Fernando - Research Assistant
Allison Taranchokov – Administrator

Further Information

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Publications in 2009

The following publications are restricted to those that are quality assured and does not include community-based presentations.

Journal Articles


Reports


Conference Papers


**Book**


**Other**


