

TASK CENTRE PROJECT

CONSULTANTS' NEWSLETTER

NO. 2

JANUARY 1994

To say it has been a considerable time since the previous Consultants' Newsletter would be an understatement! April '93 would you believe. The reason is simply that the project has expanded so much during 1993 that other aspects have taken priority. So, read on for an update.

Growth

We have serviced over 100 clients during 1993 with about one third of those including workshops. This acceptance of the project by schools is due in part to its 'from teachers for teachers' component. The materials are seen as fulfilling part of the concrete problem solving aspect of the curriculum which schools are seeking. The workshop is recognised as a vital instrument for refocussing a staff's energy and enthusiasm for improving teaching and learning throughout their mathematics curriculum.

Teachers are the best resource in a school community and this project seems to have captured all the elements which bring together the ingenuity, organisation, team work and teaching experience of a staff.

Consultants' Kit

Accompanying this newsletter is either a complete Consultants' Kit, or an update on what you already have. A complete kit is:

- Slides and Slide Script
- 10 sample tasks (6 of which are the tasks in the Sample Teacher's Notes)
- Sample Teacher's Notes
- Workshop Agenda
- Workshop Guidelines
- Teacher's Handbook
- Poster Problems
- Worksheets
- Task Catalogue
- Brochures
- More About The Tasks - sheet

Sample tasks will follow very soon and the new handbook should be sent to you by the end of February. This kit is designed to assist you in the

workshop and to provide promotion material for visits to schools or conferences in which you may be involved.

Please contact me at my home/office on: 03-726-8316 when any part of your kit needs updating.

New Consultants

Expansion has demanded that we find more consultants who are able to deliver the workshop all over Australia. The team now includes:

Pam Macklin, David Brown, Doug Clarke, Kim Leech and Anneliese Vogl in Victoria;
Ken Preece and Meg Luckie in New South Wales;
Bruce Nulty in Alice Springs.

A belated welcome to you all.

Meg was trained to deliver the workshop under a special arrangement with one Sydney region. She has now moved on, so we will wait to see what new adventures that brings. Keep in touch Meg.

Pam has suggested that it would be good to get as many consultants together as possible some time in the future to compare notes. A good thought; anyone have any idea how to organise that?

We have plans to train other consultants in Tasmania and Queensland early in 1994.

New Administration

Expansion of the project meant that Charles and I began to spend an inordinate amount of time on counselling clients and processing orders. These tasks were/are vital, but they took away from time we could spend on developing new tasks, upgrading other aspects of the project ... and writing consultants' newsletters.

We have been very fortunate to obtain the services of Sue Davis to take over this work. Sue is an experienced executive secretary who is retraining as a teacher and who has a special interest in

mathematics. Some of you will have had a call from her recently regarding workshop bookings.

Welcome to the team Sue.

Orders and initial phone calls will still pass through the C.C. office, but with the co-operation of Virginia Wood and Carol Eaves from the C.C. office, we have established an outposted processing procedure which will keep the project operating smoothly; especially when Charles and I are both in other parts of the world at the same time during April.

For your information, Sue's home/office is:
Triple S Business Services, 24 Harrison Avenue,
Burwood, 3125. Telephone: 03-808-2610

New Packing System

The packing and delivery of materials requires an amazing range of contacts with suppliers and cottage industry craftspersons. This has simply grown too big to manage on a small scale any longer. From the beginning of 1994, packing will operate from Genie Educational in Ringwood, which has already introduced a very efficient system into this spacious environment.

New Prices

We have been supplying materials until now at what was almost cost price. From January 1st, a more realistic pricing has been introduced, which will allow for continued quality improvement and for the cost of peripherals such as your consultant's kit.

Workshop with materials	\$1300
Materials only	\$900

These new prices are on the enclosed brochure and old brochures should be destroyed. We very much want to encourage the workshop and you will notice that there has been little change in the price of the total package.

New Markets

Charles has recently returned from New Zealand with 'one order in his pocket' and many others who are interested. Doug Clarke has recently returned from Louisiana, U. S. A. with reports of a great deal of interest in that area. Since the last newsletter we have sold several sets to Boston and South Carolina and Charles has in-serviced people in those areas. We also currently have several other interested groups.

I am leaving mid-March for 7 weeks in the U.K. and will be looking for opportunities to promote the project.

The Task Centre Project For Aboriginal Schools

We have been working with a group of teachers from Northern Territory for over a year to develop a set of tasks appropriate to these remote, culturally different schools. That work culminated in a Darwin conference in November, from which I brought back a couple of months work writing up tasks, Task Notes and Teachers' Handbook. That work is almost complete. The result is very exciting, both in terms of the materials, which are A4 and decorated with borders designed by some of the aboriginal children, and the realisation by the teachers on course that the materials should not be supplied to any school without some form of in-service. As a result, they are designing their own programme based on the way we have worked with them.

Teacher's Notes

They are coming ... still!. The NT project has produced much material which will be included in the Teachers' Handbook. Producing solutions for this project will also produce material which will be included in the standard Teacher's Notes. But it is a big job, so please be patient.

Best wishes,