



**WEA Illawarra**  
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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

20<sup>th</sup> April 2009

### **WEA Illawarra embraces new logo after 95 years**

*The launch will take place from 4 to 5pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April at the WEA Centre located at 50-52 Auburn Street Wollongong. Media needing to gather footage or photographs prior to the formal launch can contact Gareth McKeen to arrange a suitable time on the 21<sup>st</sup>.*

The logo that was used at the first seminar run by WEA held in Port Kembla in 1914 will be replaced on the 21<sup>st</sup> April with a new logo as part of a major new branding campaign by WEA Illawarra, one of the Illawarra's most well respected and established organisations.

Well known as an Adult Education Community College, the WEA Illawarra will unveil new branding across three main service areas as well as an overall brand that aims to ensure WEA Illawarra remains relevant as an education provider into the future.

A new web site, which will for the first time fully integrate with the WEA's enrolment system will be launched in what is a significant step forward for the organisation.

Chair of the WEA Jim Piper comments *"Over the past twelve months the WEA Illawarra Board and management have undertaken a strategic review of the organisation's role and position in our society. We recognised the need to reconsider the WEA's vision, mission, branding and logo. As a result we have softened and widened our vision and mission statements and introduced a new logo and branding that are better suited to reflect a more up to date image of what we are; that is a vigorous, growing and caring organisation providing adult education and training to the community"*.

According to Gareth McKeen (WEA Chief Executive Officer), *"These are exciting times for the WEA as we seek to strengthen our well established organisation and ensure that we continue to offer relevant services in the future"* *"One of the great aspects of the new branding is that we are sub-branding our three main service areas so that each of them has their own identity under the umbrella brand of the WEA"* *"We recognise the strong history behind the WEA and the new logo reflects that the WEA is moving with the times so that we can keep offering training to our regular customers but also attract new clients"*

In 2008 WEA services included 45% accredited training, 27% English language and 28% lifestyle courses. A total of 139,000 student hours were delivered across 7,034 enrolments. Gareth McKeen comments *"For many years we have been well known for our lifestyle courses such as pottery, art and languages however not so well known is the fact that approximately half of our training is accredited vocational training"* *"We feel that to remain financially viable we need to increase our vocational and business related services and we are confident the new branding will assist WEA to become more prominent within the business community"*

Please find attached further information relating to the WEA Illawarra.  
For further details contact Gareth McKeen at WEA **ph. 4226 1622**

*Quality Education and Training for Life-long Learning*

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### **Background information on WEA Illawarra**

WEA Illawarra is an independent not-for-profit, non government, community based organisation dedicated to the extension of life-long learning opportunities.

WEA Illawarra services cover three core areas of lifestyle courses, business and vocational training and English language education. These services are funded from a combination of competitive tenders, course fees and special project funding along with a small grant from the NSW Government for Adult and Community Education.

The name of the organisation is the Workers' Educational Association Illawarra, trading as WEA Illawarra, a company governed by a 10 person Board of Directors. There are three other WEA's operating in Australia (Hunter, Sydney and Adelaide) however all are independent of each other.

WEA Illawarra is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) approved by the NSW Vocational Education & Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) to deliver accredited vocationally based training.

WEA Illawarra is a member of Community Colleges NSW and is a foundation member of the recently created Community Colleges Australia peak body.

WEA Illawarra owns property in the Wollongong CBD located a few hundred metres from the Wollongong rail station. This location allows students to utilise public transport. WEA also owns a three classroom demountable located at Balarang Public School in Shellharbour.

On-line training is offered in partnership with Distance Learning Australia for accredited courses and with ed2go for online lifestyle courses.

WEA Illawarra supports three student run clubs that operate under the auspices of the WEA. The WEA Illawarra Ramblers, WEA Camcorder club and the WEA Film Society.

Brief history of WEA includes;

- 1<sup>st</sup> WEA lecture held in Port Kembla in 1914
- Voluntary WEA Illawarra committee formed in 1914
- WEA purchased it's first venue at 97 Corrimal Street in 1962
- First literacy courses commenced in 1990
- WEA became a Company Limited by Guarantee in 1993
- Established a three classroom venue at Balarang Public School in 1996
- Moved to current location in Auburn Street in 2000
- Won the Federal government tender for language, literacy and numeracy in 2002
- On line training commenced in 2003
- In 2005 over 150,000 students in past 20 years (records do not exist prior)
- CEO Eric Williams retired in 2006 after 26 years with the WEA Illawarra
- New constitution adopted in 2007
- Online lifestyle courses introduced in 2008
- New logo and branding adopted in 2009