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credits, and compliance-related on-the-job training of all types dominate the vast majority of training, coupled with first-level supervisor/team leader training being relatively common.

Modern apprenticeships combine both on-the-job training, block course education, applied learning and supervised work hours to provide advanced operational journeymen and eventually qualified artisans. The industry training organisations handle this reasonably well.

Conversely, there are few, if any, industry or government coordinated initiatives that look to bridge the gap between these vocational courses and the upper-level applied education programmes required to build the specialist management expertise base needed to meet the skills shortfall likely in the New Zealand logistics and supply chain sector over the next 10 years.

The historical response from senior industry leaders would be to request the government to allow more specialist immigrants in from the UK, South Africa or elsewhere. These leaders then wonder why current New Zealand staff become annoyed at the prospect of not being able to advance up the company career ladder, or why young people cannot be bothered entering the industry. An element of reflection would not hurt here, people.

Corporate support

Certainly, the New Zealand Defence Force is actively educating its staff at tertiary levels in logistics and supply chain management, and openly acknowledges the importance of these skills to its organisation. In addition, there are a few large corporates – such as Ports of Auckland and The Warehouse – who have generously funded tertiary academic programmes with the University of Auckland and Massey University that are related to the sector. Massey also has a longstanding programme in supply chain management and also a specialist aviation programme. A number of the institutes of technology also have various offerings. In the 20 years that I have been teaching the CILT-UK Profes-

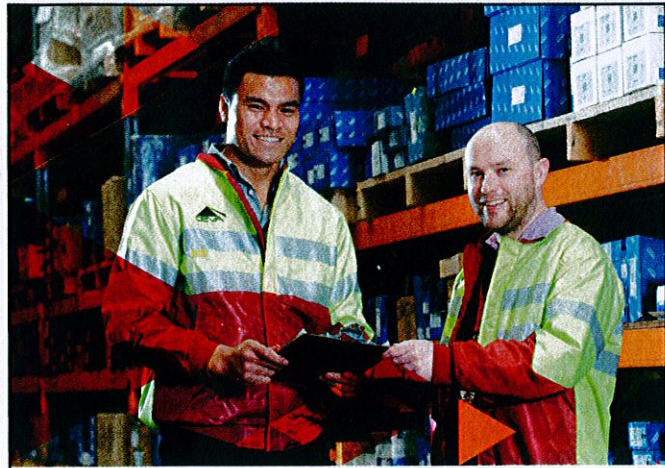
sional Diploma in Logistics and Transport through the Logistics Training Group and Massey, I have seen numerous companies of all sizes, from Foodstuffs and Fonterra to SB Logistics and Schneider Electric, consistently support their staff to study on the diploma, and past graduates are now sending their own employees.

While overall enrolment numbers would have exceeded 1000 during that period, this number is low relative to the skills required nationally. However, in terms of return on investment, in the last two years alone, all the graduates have completed diploma projects that have saved their companies well over 200% savings on their cost of study, with two students' projects saving over \$1 million per year, and others in the hundreds of thousands per year. These systems savings take the entire dollar – possibly more – to the bottom line, unlike sales which only make a small percentage.

Velocity of change

Advances in logistics and supply chain communications and related technology are only just beginning. Driverless forklifts, trucks, trains, ships, AGVs (automated guided vehicles) and UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) are here, along with fully automated warehouses. 3D parts can be manufactured on the spot to get vehicles in remote locations underway, and soon we will see energy bodysuits that operatives will wear to aid muscle fatigue and workplace productivity, and even get wounded soldiers back to safety.

New Zealand logistics and supply chain operators cannot afford to replace their retiring managers of today with similar people. The world has moved on, and the velocity of change is increasing. That said, in the interests of long-term industry sustainability, their replacements can, and should, come from the New Zealand talent pool. This will ensure we build the national skill base from within, and incentivise our graduates and achievers with adequate potential opportunities to meet future skill demands.



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Walter Glass is the programme director for the Logistics Training Group – for further information, visit www.ltg.co.nz; the second part of this article will look at how well the current education system fits with New Zealand's recruitment and employment mechanisms and will appear in the Feb/Mar'15 edition of FTD

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