



THE HISTORY OF HUNTERNET

We have pleasure in presenting "The First 10 Years", being a brief history of the HunterNet Co-operative Ltd, which was first incorporated in December 1992.

The decision to complete this study was taken in late 2001 in response to many enquiries about our network from organisations from throughout Australia who were keen to know more about the factors which have led to the on-going success of HunterNet over this time.

We were also motivated by a desire on the part of Harvey Knox, who spoke often about the need to document our history covering both things we did well, and perhaps those where we may have been able to do better the second time around.

Our particular thanks to Andrew Eckford for his hard work and perseverance in putting this document together.

We hope you find "The First 10 years" interesting, and we are confident that it will be helpful in putting in place plans to ensure even greater success for HunterNet into the next Decade.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John F Coyle'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John F Coyle

Manager

HunterNet Co-operative Ltd

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CHAPTER 1 – HUNTERNET OVERVIEW

HUNTERNET AT A GLANCE

HunterNet is a unique network concept in bringing together firms that can offer resources, capabilities, skills and expertise unmatched by any single company. HunterNet provides drive and enthusiasm for member companies to develop new projects and concepts.

- >> HunterNet is a registered Co-Operative of 32 manufacturing, engineering and electrical companies, providing a 'one stop shop' for expertise in:
 - > Mining
 - > Power Generation
 - > Defence
 - > Transportation
 - > Engineering.
- >> Member companies range in size from 10 to 200 employees
- >> Their combined turnover is in excess of \$180 million
- >> HunterNet companies employ more than 1700 people
- >> More than 40 apprentices and trainees are employed directly by the HunterNet Group Training Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of the company, working for member companies.
- >> In addition to the core members, HunterNet has:
 - > 7 Patron organisations (large industrials)
 - > 13 Sponsor organisations (business support and service groups)
 - > Access to a range of government departments and affiliates.

HunterNet has worked to become a portal into one of the leading manufacturing and industrial zones of South East Asia. This has been achieved through information and resource sharing, fostering an attitude of trust and co-operation in the region. This approach has assisted the Hunter Region to gain a reputation for being a centre of innovative and high quality engineering solutions.

WHAT IS THE HUNTERNET CONCEPT?

HunterNet Co-operative Ltd was established in 1992 as a self-help co-operative for Hunter based manufacturing and engineering businesses. In the last 10 years, HunterNet has grown from 14 businesses to 32 members and a series of support organisations.

"The basic premise of HunterNet is that small companies working in unison can match or exceed the capabilities and performance of a single larger entity"¹. HunterNet aims to promote and develop business opportunities for both its members and the Hunter Region. Throughout its history, the Co-operative has sought to:

- >> Market the combined capability of the network
- >> Provide training opportunities for members
- >> Utilise the combined leverage of the group in commercial and project situations.

Placing any definitive characteristics on the network is difficult at best – Members vary in size across industry sectors with different levels of participation and with different technology and production capabilities. HunterNet does not have a product as such, but rather solves problems and sells solutions. However, the network draws together with a certain goodwill between members, assisting each other when necessary and acting with the strategic leadership of a single voice in political arenas.

¹ HunterNet Brochure, 2002.

The role of HunterNet can be defined in terms of the way the network operates, namely:

- >> A not for profit organisation
- >> Formed by companies coming together
- >> Acting voluntarily, without seeking personal profit but instead to build benefits for all
- >> Is controlled by members themselves
- >> Any material benefit gained by a member is proportionate to their involvement with HunterNet.²

In this capacity, the services of HunterNet are delivered with the intention of generating the greatest possible opportunities for businesses at the least cost.

HunterNet has gained a reputation for providing access to a wide range of fluid, electrical and mechanical engineering, project management and equipment manufacture (amongst others). The integration of manufacturing/production and information technology has also made the region a developing centre for process control – putting HunterNet members at the forefront of advanced IT capabilities and process design³.

HunterNet is managed by a full time Manager who reports to a seven-member board. The board consists of representatives from member companies who meet regularly to discuss the needs of the collective. Support staff for the network include an office manager and administrative assistant, working in conjunction with a full time Manager for the Group Training Company.

WHAT BENEFITS HAVE HUNTERNET MEMBERS RECEIVED?

HunterNet has been described as a 'conceptual cloud' and one of the difficulties in communicating the concept is the variation in benefits that members receive. Depending on the nature of the organisation, or even the individual representative, the benefit received tends to be based on a unique mixture of interests. The main benefits to members are described below.

Exposure – Greater awareness in the commercial and industrial community. The HunterNet forum gives companies a chance to 'show off' their facilities and what they are capable of doing. Increasing awareness throughout the network is more likely to lead to future job interests, if other members are aware of the potential opportunity for work. The more input from the member, the greater exposure and resultant benefit.

Networking Opportunity – While a series of jobs have been sought and passed on directly through the HunterNet offices, to individual members, other project opportunities have developed into group projects. While these network projects are managed independently of the HunterNet office, the opportunity has arisen through involvement in the Network itself.

Company Development – HunterNet assists members in the improvement of standards, as exemplified by the pursuit of Quality Assurance Accreditation and Best Practice. The overall benefit of this move has been to raise quality within the workplace. Similarly, companies have been able to learn a range of other skills, through additional development such as taxation or marketing seminars and computer courses. Many of these initiatives became a collegial learning environment for the members to develop together.

HunterNet Group Training Company – HNGTC plays a critical role in the development of labour for member companies. By facilitating and mentoring the program in conjunction with Hunter Institute of Technology, HunterNet has been able to match the needs of companies with the capabilities of Hunter Institute of Technology in fields that interest apprentices.

Individual Development – Many of the individuals who have been actively involved in HunterNet have achieved self-improvement through the experience. The chance to share personal insights into business has enabled the intrinsic

² Based on 'The Third Sector', Mark Lyons, 2001.

³ 'Newcastle and the Hunter Region', 2000-2001.

development of skills such as negotiation and strategic planning. As the individuals representing companies are primarily owner/operators, these skills have been able to filter down through their organisations.

Group Capability – One of the key aspirations of any co-operative is to be competitive against larger players. While member companies operate successful individual businesses, drawing together allows for much larger and/or more sophisticated projects to be handled. The patrons and sponsors play a key role in these initiatives through their support and input of their specialised knowledge.

These benefits only work when businesses and individuals are prepared to contribute to the overall network, and in doing so benefit themselves.

WHAT HAS MADE THE NETWORK SUCCESSFUL OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS?

The establishment and development of a Network is a complex and challenging process. While many networks and co-operatives have been established, a much smaller number have survived and been as successful as HunterNet. Some of the factors which have contributed to the success of HunterNet include:

Membership Criteria

While patron and sponsor members are primarily large organisations, the core membership of HunterNet is comprised of small to medium enterprises (SMEs) that operate from the Hunter region. The members' representative must hold decision-making authority so that meetings are 'actionable' and are not delayed by seeking outside approval.

By limiting full membership to Hunter Region companies, the vested interest in the performance of the area remains a central objective.

Driving Individuals

While the network formally consists of companies, the role and relationship of individuals drive the organisation. In both network initiatives and the chase for individual projects, a 'champion' or leading individuals have normally come forward to run with the concept. While no single individual has undertaken to lead every initiative in the history of the network, the personal drive and leadership of a core group of individuals has played a significant role in the success of HunterNet.

Learning Focus

Throughout the history of HunterNet, continual improvement of standards and learning has been sought. While this benefits the individual companies, this improvement has also developed the status and relevance of the network to the wider Hunter community.

Trust

One of the most widely recognised but difficult to overcome pitfalls of network organisations is the perceived lack of trust between businesses competing in the same industry. If it is possible to recognise that each member has a set of differentiated skills to contribute to the group, then competitive distrust can be overcome. Through capability sharing and relationships established over a long period of time, HunterNet has been able to build and grow a level of mutual cooperation in what has traditionally been an industry of distrust and fierce independence.

Act as Regional Catalyst

By forming a cluster of industrial companies, the Hunter Region has been able to lay claim to the profile of a one-stop-shop for many engineering solutions. This, in turn, has helped place the Hunter at the forefront of industrial shopping lists. Whether or not HunterNet members gain specific contracts, this process serves to draw business to the region. By acting as a drawcard, the Co-operative helps develop business for its members.

CHAPTER 2 – THE EVOLUTION OF HUNTERNET

PRE-HUNTERNET

Perceptions of Newcastle and the Hunter Region have traditionally been associated with industry – particularly to shipping, coal mining, manufacturing, transport and steel. However, by the late 1980's the manufacturing industry in the Hunter Region was undergoing major structural changes. Operations at Carrington Slipways were winding down and while the final closure of BHP had not yet been announced, the workforce and workload had been significantly cut. As a result, many of the local manufacturing and engineering companies in the region that had traditionally relied on the business produced by large corporations were suffering decline. These small to medium enterprises needed to find new opportunities in order to stay in business and grow.

At this time, there was a push from major industrial companies for smaller manufacturers to group together in order to achieve quality standards (such as ISO accreditation), and thereby supply the larger manufacturers with high quality services/products. Taking this further, Alex Young (working for Hunter Development), suggested that these small/medium-sized companies also work together on marketing and skills development as a network.

Floated as an idea by the Chamber of Manufactures of NSW in 1991, HunterNet was at this stage simply a network concept. John Murgatroyd from the Sydney office of the Chamber was instrumental in drawing together the first six or seven businesses into a network. The Chamber, through Jeff Latham of the Hunter Region office, organised interested businesses in meeting casually to examine new ideas and the status of the industry.

HUNTERNET IN 1992

The members of HunterNet first met formally on Wednesday the 25th of March in 1992 at the Hunter Street premises of what was then the Chamber of Manufactures (to become the Business Chamber) to discuss the viability of establishing a network of engineering and manufacturing companies in the region. Concepts surrounding strategic planning of this type were discussed with Michael Polonsky and Bill Merrilees of the University of Newcastle. At this stage, HunterNet consisted of fourteen companies, interested in sharing resources in order to provide a more distinct competitive advantage for engineering companies in the region.

In the following months, the members chose to adopt a Co-operative structure and contribute an annual membership fee of \$1000 for expenses incurred in collaborating and promoting the network's activities. The main aims of HunterNet at this time were to develop the capabilities of the members, grow market opportunities and reduce the costs of supplying services. These objectives are still central to the outlook of HunterNet.

“Networking brings together like-minded organisations to share information and resources. The resultant entity has a greater capability than its individual members to the benefit of all customers.”

HunterNet Brochure.

On 19th of August 1992, HunterNet was formally convened as a Co-operative and each business purchased one share for \$100, which entitled each representative to one vote in decision making. The members of the newly formed Co-operative elected a board of directors, who would shape the early direction of HunterNet.

The inaugural HunterNet board, as of August, consisted of:

Joss De Iuliis - Chairman	Gene Van Aardt – Treasurer/Secretary
Eric Kreutzer	Allan Clair
Terry Askew	Brad Scott
Neville Sawyer	

The Board of Directors at this time identified a need to clarify HunterNet's plans, understand what capabilities could be combined, and to promote the organisation generally. In recognising the role of HunterNet as selling combined expertise and the ability to work together, they urged members to put forward a primary or 'head' company in joint ventures to act as the main contact point.

With relatively modest membership fees, HunterNet needed more funding to perform any significant industry wide activities. Business planning support from the University of Newcastle and the assistance of both the Chamber of Manufactures and the Metal Traders Industry Association (MTIA), enabled HunterNet to secure operational funding. HunterNet was incorporated as a Co-operative (under NSW Corporations Act) on 11th December 1992.

HUNTERNET IN 1993

By early 1993, significant interest had been shown by HunterNet companies in being involved with both the Minehunter and Redbank Power projects. Around this time, the need to build a directory of skills and capabilities of the member companies had been acknowledged. Without an understanding of what each other was capable of, co-operative projects would be near impossible. In fostering this understanding, the regular meetings were, and continue to be held, at various facilities of the member organisations, so that all the members could be familiarised with what that business was capable of performing.

"What we are trying to do is increase the size of the pie of activity that's happening in Newcastle – not trying to increase our business by pinching each other's work."

*Joss De Juiis, HunterNet Chairman
Newcastle Herald, 13th May 1993*

The Herald's Opinion

The Newcastle Herald: Monday, September 6, 1993

A breath of fresh air

THE fledgling engineering network group HunterNet, which was officially launched in Newcastle last week, is an organisation long overdue in this region. HunterNet, an alliance of 20 specialist engineering, manufacturing, electrical and consulting companies, has dedicated itself to pursuing major contracts for Newcastle that would be beyond the scope of individual firms. In doing this, it has set about replacing the stale 'jobbing' mentality that has dogged Newcastle industry for decades with an atmosphere of cooperation and information sharing that will be a welcome breath of fresh air for the city.

Companies that attended the first HunterNet meeting in August 1991 were guarded about their operations, and understandably so. After years of zealously keeping their management styles, ideas and innovations under wraps, the concept of sharing them with perceived competitors must have been difficult to overcome. But a visit by HunterNet members to Newcastle's biggest engineering firm, A. Goninan and Co at Broadmeadow, helped drive home the benefits of cooperation. In a move that would previously have been inconceivable, Goninan showed HunterNet members through its plant and gave them tips on seeking quality assurance. In the many months since, HunterNet has grown and its members have prospered through a collective approach to problem solving.

Now it could be Newcastle's turn to benefit. HunterNet has used its pooled resources to employ a consultant on a project aimed at securing Newcastle as the construction site for the Navy's \$1billion minehunter contract. The group is visiting the three shortlisted tenderers to convince them that Newcastle is the place to build, and has signed a secrecy agreement with one to gain extra information. But rather than harping, as it so easily could, that it must be Newcastle's turn for a major job, HunterNet is promoting the region's industrial and technical expertise. It wants to know what the tenderers require to build here, and is ready to take requests for additional infrastructure to the appropriate political forum. In another move that needs all the encouragement it can get, HunterNet is considering employing a full-time marketing person to spread the word about Newcastle's talents and its new industrial attitude.

HunterNet's activities should be applauded, and its members congratulated, for recognising that the days of waiting for work to fall in their laps are well and truly over. No other alliance of engineering companies in this city, and there have been some, has gone as far in addressing the fundamental changes needed to win major contracts. HunterNet's members have taken a significant cultural step. If Newcastle is to get a slice of contracts such as the minehunters, other companies should follow.

This level of trust in revealing processes to other businesses was virtually unprecedented in the manufacturing industry, particularly where many of the organisations who had been aggressively competing merely months previously were now opening doors. Many members of HunterNet consider the first invitation to tour the facilities of Goninan (through Harvey Knox and Chris Huggins) to be a turning point in the evolution of the network.

This capability and opportunity search included tours of the Williamstown RAAF and Singleton Army bases with a view to uncovering innovative jobs that could be performed within the Hunter Region, by Hunter companies, rather than sourced from further afield. Replacing the 'jobbing' mentality provided a significant shift in thinking of companies in the region (see 'A breath of fresh air', opposite).

With the exception of Stan Harris replacing Allan Clair on the HunterNet board, the directors of the Co-operative were unchanged for the 1993-1994 year.

With a range of possibilities opening up, there was also a need to expand the membership of HunterNet and seek additional organisations to contribute their expertise. There was a need for more focused and detailed planning and goals.

To assist in gaining exposure within the business community, Dr Ken Moss, CEO of Howard Smith, formally launched HunterNet on the 2nd of September 1993.

With coverage from five of the major media outlets and attracting in excess of 180 guests to the South Steyne, the event was hailed a success. Feedback on the publicity was highly positive and the number of companies seeking to become sponsor members sharply increased. Interest from engineering companies seeking to join the Co-operative as members was evidenced by the number of guests at subsequent general meetings.



HunterNet Launch, 2nd September 1993 (Newcastle Morning Herald 3/9/93)

With broadening the membership, there was also a need to split the membership structure into members, associates and sponsors of HunterNet. Manufacturers active in the area, but nationally based were designated as associates, while regionally based but non-manufacturing businesses could provide sponsor support. In this way, the core focus of the network remained with the small to medium manufacturers of the region.

“Networking is a powerful industrial weapon because all firms need to continuously improve quality standards, implement award restructuring, train employees, chose appropriate and up to date technology and strategically plan and market.”

Minister Ray Chappell
Media Release, 16th September 1993

In September of 1993, HunterNet received \$30,000 ‘seed’ funding from the Federal Government (through NIES) to support the launch and expand operations, through the office of Business & Regional Development Minister, Ray Chappell.

HUNTERNET IN 1994

At this time, considerable time and effort was given by the Directors in the development of a detailed Business Plan, and aimed primarily at long term planning and the improvement of skills. Unveiled on the 22nd of March 1994, this plan identified the need for common problem solving and the sharing of capability information between member companies. This included extending information along the supply chain – talking to suppliers and customers. The idea was to undertake projects that were a better fit to clients’ specific requirements. Better still, this could also provide the potential to build new markets by identifying new products and needs. These directions, combined with a focus on the Asian region as a whole, were critical in underwriting the longer-term effectiveness of the Network.

HunterNet members also took part in the Australian International Engineering Exhibition (AIEE) on the other side of the exhibitor’s table. Run from 30th May – 3rd June, this was one of the first pro-active promotions of HunterNet.



Engineering show: An exhibit of engineering wares from the 26 member companies of the HunterNet organisation carried the Hunter Valley flag this week at Australia’s International Engineering Exhibition at Darling Harbour. The four-day exhibit, which opened on Monday, showcased national and international business equipment and designs, which drew crowds of businessmen, schoolchildren and others. The chairman of Hunternet, Mr Joss de Iuliis, said this years’ exhibit by HunterNet was the group’s first showing at the bi-annual event. Mr de Iuliis said that despite early nerves, the exhibit had gone well, and had addressed a new range of customers. Hunternet representatives, from left, Mr Tony Masters, Mr Ian King, Ms Bernadette McGree and Mr Ken Hulleck, at the exhibition in Sydney.

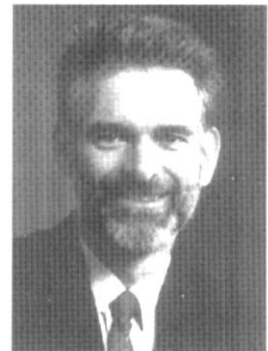
AIEE '94. Newcastle Morning Herald. 4/6/94

A delegation of HunterNet companies attended the Hanover Trade Fair between the 18th-28th April, and were hosted by Mannesman Demag. Impressed by the size and range of companies participating in the fair, HunterNet members were exposed to a diverse set of engineering concepts and also developed ideas for potential new markets.

HunterNet was successful in securing \$250,000 in Federal Government funding on 19th July 1994 to institute best practice programs in six of the member companies⁴. The funding was to act as a 'seed', being matched by significant contributions from individual companies (\$4 for every \$1 of funding), and drawing HunterNet into searching for more sophisticated work.

On 26th July 1994, Department of State & Regional Development (DSRD) provided a grant for \$225,000 spread over three years and office space accommodation within DSRD premises, presented by Minister Ray Chappell. The requirement of the grant was that HunterNet became self-funded at the end of three years (ie 1996).

After examining the scope of what the expanding tasks would involve, the board of directors also included in the business plan a recommendation that HunterNet appoint a full time manager to coordinate and market its activities, and thereby develop a unique identity for "HunterNet" itself. In this way, Ian Hissey was introduced as Business Manager on the 18th of July, 1994. His role was to represent the face of HunterNet and support the network needs of each of the member companies. With Ian Hissey as full time manager, HunterNet moved into DSRD office space at 251 Wharf Road, from where it still operates today.



Ian Hissey, 1994

The new office was officially opened on Monday, 26th of September 1994, by Minister Ray Chappell and HunterNet Board Chairman Joss De Iuliis. The opening attracted in excess of 170 people, including political and industry guests, along with substantial media coverage. Subsequently, these facilities enabled HunterNet to establish close links with government departments and organisations operating from the location, including DSRD, Hunter Export Centre (HEC), Austrade, Hunter Economic Development Corporation (HEDC), and Industrial Supplies Office (ISO).

While Neville Sawyer had replaced Gene Van Aardt as Treasurer in August, the board took on a number of changes in October of 1994, and was made up as follows:

Joss De Iuliis – Chairman	Eric Kreutzer – Vice Chairman
Neville Sawyer – Treasurer/Secretary	
Terry Askew	Bob Cowan
Stan Harris	Stephen Laing

By the end of 1993, with a push for the attainment of Total Quality Management (TQM) and other programs, nine of the member companies had achieved Quality Assurance Accreditation, continuing through 1994 to extend to nearly all members. Through the search for World Best Practice from a diverse range of manufacturing disciplines, standards in member companies continued to improve. In August of 1994, companies were being taught how to implement Best Practice Project Management skills. HunterNet companies were congratulated on their high standards in September of 1994, by which time virtually all had achieved Quality Assurance Accreditation. Many requests to learn more about the best practice processes being used and the benefits of network organisations were received from this initiative.

The HunterNet Awards were introduced in November 1994, as a light addition to the end of the year. Six awards were presented at this time:

<i>Stan Harris:</i>	<i>Communications Award</i>
<i>Glen Woods:</i>	<i>Inquisitive Award</i>
<i>Ian King:</i>	<i>Image Award</i>
<i>Gene Van Aardt:</i>	<i>Supporters Award</i>
<i>Bob Cowan:</i>	<i>Innovators Award</i>
<i>Joss De Iuliis:</i>	<i>Leadership Award</i>

⁴ Newcastle Morning Herald, July 20th 1994.

HUNTERNET IN 1995

At the end of 1994, Ian Hissey resigned as Business Manager of HunterNet. Upon careful consideration, the board appointed Harvey Knox, formerly of Goninan as the New Development Business Manager in place of Ian Hissey. Harvey formally assumed this role on the 31st of January 1995.

At the end of January, Stan Harris resigned from the HunterNet board, after which two interim directors were appointed in February – namely John McColl and Tony Masters.

HunterNet delegates attended the 1995 Hanover Trade Fair (31st March-9th April), featuring a huge range of technology and innovations, robotics, materials handling and the push for environmentally friendly sciences. HunterNet used the experience to gain wider recognition in the global community and to learn more about networking on an international basis.

The strategic outlook for 1995 was to gain greater exposure, re-examine the role of the sponsor members in HunterNet and look at possibilities offered by the mining and power generation fields. Harvey Knox actively pushed to innovate and find new ways of getting things done. As such, HunterNet gained further exposure through the attendance of trade shows and coverage in the media. A regular section of the Newcastle Herald was utilised to inform and promote the activities of member companies, reaching a wider audience throughout the community. Harvey also organised a number of training and development activities for the members, such as seminars on the role and process involved in tendering contracts. Involvement with the Industrial Supplies Office (ISO) was encouraged, seeking to improve the interaction of local businesses up and down the supply chain.



Harvey Knox, 1995

HunterNet received it's first commission for a joint member project in March of 1995.

The HunterNet Board consists of seven directors, who serve for two years. Alternately, three or four directors retire each year at the annual meeting, however remain eligible for re-election.

*Rules of HunterNet Co-Operative Limited, 1992
(Originally lodged with the
Registry of Co-Operatives 11th December 1992).*

Tony Masters

The board from November 1995-96 was:

John McColl – Chairman

Bob Cowan – Treasurer

Neville Sawyer – Secretary

Terry Askew

Joss De Iuliis

Stephen Laing

HUNTERNET IN 1996

HunterNet became involved with the Warren Centre in a series of round table industry discussions titled 'Australia: Your Market', commencing 27th March 1996. This consisted of three discussion sessions over a period of months, designed to assess what manufacturing businesses were doing, and try and improve on their performance in the current economy. The program concluded with a range of research aspects being discussed around:

- >> Economic Conditions
- >> Coal Industry
- >> Oil & Gas
- >> Sydney Olympics
- >> Defence Industry.

The outcome was a plan provided for HunterNet to strengthen performance in the region and within its membership⁵.

The Business Plan of HunterNet was reviewed in 1996, with the aims being to:

- >> Ensure the financial viability of the Co-operative
- >> Grow business opportunities
- >> Develop the capabilities of the members
- >> Provide other valuable services to members.

Finances of the organisation had been reviewed in 1995, and were being implemented in 1996, with the equal membership contributions being modified to reflect the size (number of employees) of each business. The aim was for HunterNet to be independently funded, rather than relying on government support. This independence was achieved before the end of 1996.



Tom Gunn (Berendsen), Sandy Hidas (Newcastle Machine Shop) and Zener Electric representative with their awards

CHAIRMAN'S AWARDS

The HunterNet Awards became the more formal Chairman's Awards – three awards each year chosen from four categories: Networking, Export, Quality and Innovation categories. In 1996, these were:

Networking Award	Berendsen Fluid
Quality Award	Lake Tooling
Innovation Award	Zener Electric

With Tony Masters declining renomination, the HunterNet board as of August 1996 consisted of:

John McColl – Chairman
Bob Cowan – Treasurer
Phil Hird

Terry Askew – Vice Chairman
Joss De Iuliis
Charles Pope

In 1996, HunterNet became involved in the Young Achievement Australia (YAA) program, exposing high school students to the experience of marketing and managing a small business. Each year, YAA involves more than 14,000 students in the program.

One of the initiatives taken in this phase of development was to investigate the possibility of connecting the member companies with trainees and apprentices. Involvement with the Department of Employment, Education & Training (DEET) was introduced to examine the possibilities of a Group Employer Program. The program was introduced as the Apprentice Training Scheme. With Murray Christie on contract from DEET providing the initial setup of the scheme

throughout the second half of 1996, the HunterNet Group Training Company (HNGTC) was launched. In November, Wayne Gillett took on the full time role as Training Manager. HNGTC entered a three-year contract with DEET (by this stage renamed as DEETYA) to the value of \$150,000 used to support employment and training, and entered 1997 with 21 apprentices and 1 trainee.

The role of the HNGTC was to integrate work experience with off the job training and by doing so, accelerate and broaden the experience of apprentices working with member companies. The HunterNet member companies employing apprentices contribute to the running costs of HNGTC based on the number of apprentices indentured (a more comprehensive overview of



John McColl (left) with John Longrigg, Wayne Gillett and Harvey Knox accepting funding for HNGTC from a DEETYA representative.

⁵ 'Engineering Enterprise Growth: HunterNet Round Tables Handbook', The Warre

the operation of the HunterNet Group Training Company may be found in Initiatives section). HNGTC is a 'not for profit' organisation.

HUNTERNET IN 1997

Feedback from members of HunterNet and the industrial community in 1996 indicated that through a range of programs, HunterNet had developed a high level of goodwill and was being positively perceived throughout the community. HunterNet was providing an inspiration for companies in the Hunter to seek projects. However, there was also the desire to pass on the skills that companies had acquired to others and the need to re-establish a detailed understanding of member companies capabilities.

Adoption of a mentoring scheme was chosen as a method of sharing the knowledge and skills acquired by HunterNet members, through the AusIndustry Networks initiative. A single-volume capabilities directory was compiled - letting members know who was who and acting as a catalogue for potential projects.

This program sought to increase the profile and involvement of HunterNet through a range of avenues. HunterNet established further ties with Newcastle University, namely the newly formed Graduate School of Business (GSB), under Professor Scott Holmes. In this way, HunterNet members were now able to access both engineering information and general management skills. Throughout 1997, a series of training programs were implemented to improve project management, leadership, marketing and presentation abilities.

Between the 22nd and 24th of July 1997, HunterNet took part in QME 97 (Queensland Mining & Engineering Exhibition) in Mackay, with over 400 exhibitors. The success of the exhibition proved that this type of marketing was cost effective for both manufacturing companies and HunterNet.

A series of trade and export initiatives in Asia were pursued, Harvey Knox visiting industry associations in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines.

Directors of HunterNet were able to meet with Prime Minister Howard in July of 1997 to examine policies on manufacturing, training and the development of Redbank Power Station. As a collaborative effort, substantial amounts of research and preparation were invested in the proposal. The final presentation of material by Harvey lasted less than twenty minutes, but secured the support of the Prime Minister and the government in investing \$30million in the development of industry in the Hunter Region.

In October, the HunterNet board was again revised, so that for the 1997-98 period, the directors consisted of:

John McColl – Chairman
 Bob Cowan – Vice Chairman
 Charles Pope – Treasurer
 Terry Askew
 Joss De Iuliis
 Phil Hird
 Brian Ness



*HunterNet representatives with Prime Minister John Howard.
 L to R: Charles Pope, Bob Cowan, Len Wohadlo (National Power), Harvey Knox, PM John Howard MHR, Terry Askew, Phil Hird, Joss De Iuliis, Roy Alper (National Power).*

**CHAIRMAN'S AWARDS**

The 1997 Awards were presented to:

<i>Networking Award</i>	<i>Sparke Helmore</i>
<i>Export Award</i>	<i>Cowan Manufacturing</i>
<i>Quality Award</i>	<i>Maxwell Engineering</i>

Ross Bolth from Maxwell Engineering receiving the 1997 Quality Award from Chairman John McColl

HUNTERNET IN 1998

Advitech (a member company) was contracted to develop and launch a website for HunterNet. The website was completed and operationally launched in July 1999, acting as an information portal for both member companies and the wider community.

Terry Askew resigned from the board in February of 1998, with six directors serving through until the September election. With Joss De Iuliis standing aside, the 1998-1999 board consisted of:

Bob Cowan – Chairman	Brian Ness – Vice Chairman
John McColl – Treasurer	John Coyle
Phil Hird	John McArthur
Charles Pope	

With the closure of J&T McArthur in October, John McArthur resigned as director.

CHAIRMAN'S AWARDS

In 1998, the Awards included a special Encouragement Award for an individual:

Encouragement Award	Warwick Hibble
Quality Award	Industrial Maintenance & Fabrication
Networking Award	Hunter Institute of Technology

HunterNet continued to focus on export markets in 1998, joining the Hunter Export Centre with Bruce Hume on an export mission to Asia. Nine HunterNet companies promoted the region to Hong Kong as part of the Asia Opportunities Trade and Investment Mission in August. Contracts on the Hong Kong MTRC Rail Project came as a direct result. "We are in an excellent position to make our mark internationally"⁶.

HUNTERNET IN 1999

HunterNet became involved with the University of Newcastle Industry Scholarship Scheme (UNISS) through Ian Webster, providing a Software Engineering scholarship to the faculty worth \$50,000. The first scholarship was

⁶ Bob Cowan, quoted in 'The Star (Newcastle)', September 16 1998.

presented in 1999 (to commence in 2000) to Denise Fernandez, who graduates in May 2004, having spent 84 weeks working with industry during the course of the four-year degree.

The other major initiative undertaken by HunterNet at this time was to outline an industry wide shift in the way business thinking was done. This was to be known as the 'Model for Action', and used as a tool for developing the knowledge economy of manufacturing in the Hunter Region, completed and submitted in 2000. A more comprehensive overview of the Model-for-Action and the involvement of HunterNet are contained in the Initiatives section.

In early 1999, HunterNet was pursuing a range of project opportunities both locally and internationally. The construction of the Kooragang coal loader for PWCS offered a range of projects for HunterNet members. There were early indicators of the push for high-tech solutions and the knowledge profile HunterNet was achieving at this time. British Aerospace was drawn to the region with the Lead-in Fighter project. Following the economic difficulties noted at this time, HunterNet was seeking further exposure, not just of the network but also of the Hunter Region.

With Charles Pope resigning as a board director in June, the September board election saw some change from the previous year. Directors for the new millenium consisted of:



(LtoR): Phil Hird, Sandy Hidas, Bob Cowan (Chairman), Harvey Knox (Manager), Steven Smith, John Coyle (Vice Chair), John McColl, Denis Hancock (Accountant), Joss De Iulius (Treasurer).



CHAIRMAN'S AWARDS
The 1999 Awards returned to the traditional format:
Networking Award Advitech
Export Award Industrial Automation Services
Innovation Award Transform Composites

Larry Platt, Director of Advitech receiving the 1999 Network Award from Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Tourism Sandra Nori, and Chairman Bob Cowan

HUNTERNET IN 2000

HunterNet Model for Action was compiled in May and submitted to DSRD in June of 2000, detailing plans for stimulating the manufacturing industry and moving the Hunter Region towards an industrial leader profile. The plan is to act as a platform for the cooperation, communication and coordination of industry⁷.

⁷ 'Knowledge-Intensive Manufacturing in the Hunter Valley: A Model for Action', A proposal by the HunterNet Co-operative Limited, May 2000.

By 2000, HunterNet had been financially independent for three years, due to the success of broadening representation from across industry groups, and the close connection with patron, sponsor and affiliate member companies.



Murray Christie

In February, Wayne Gillett resigned as manager of HNGTC. Murray Christie, who had assisted in the establishment of the training scheme, was appointed Manager in March 2000.

The Hunter Valley Research Foundation (HVRF) study in October 2000 indicated that there was a downturn in the coal mining industry, which had flow on effects to large mining engineering firms and consequently smaller firms (such as HunterNet members). This has contributed to the decline in manufacturing employment over the last few years.

While John McColl had resigned from the board in July, the directors as at September 2000 were otherwise unchanged with:

John Coyle – Chairman
Steven Smith – Vice Chairman
Phil Hird – Treasurer
Bob Cowan
Joss De Iuliis
Sandy Hidas

*Newcastle and the Hunter Region,
2000-2001, p82.*

In the Christmas period of 2000, Denise Fernandez, the first HunterNet UNISS recipient, was able to work with seven HunterNet members to improve their operating systems. With the overall industry downturn and resultant shrinking membership, 2000 saw the return of the HunterNet Business Plan. The membership base was increased across a wider range of industries, although economic conditions were discouraging for retained members.

CHAIRMAN'S AWARDS
Awarded in 2000 to:

Networking Award	Hunter Control
Quality Award	Priestley Electrical
Innovation Award	Stelform Engineering



*Phil Priestley accepting the
2000 Quality Award from
Chairman John Coyle*



*Kent Lancaster accepting the
2000 Innovation Award from
Chairman John Coyle*

HUNTERNET IN 2001

At the beginning of 2001, HunterNet accepted \$50,000 assistance from the NSW DSRD for the undertaking of an audit of capabilities in the region, as one of the initial steps towards the Model for Action.

*NETWORKS:
MACKAY AREA INDUSTRY NETWORK (MAIN).*

A delegation from MAIN studied HunterNet in March 2001, acknowledging in particular:

- > The strong attitude of people contributing to the welfare of the Hunter Region.*
- > The approach of HunterNet in only taking on as much as the network could manage.*
- > Dealing with projects individually, without a formal tendering process.*

Early in 2001, Harvey Knox was taken ill, and sadly passed away on 6 June 2001, after having contributed to HunterNet since its inception and serving as its Manager for more than six years. In memoriam, the Harvey Knox Opportunity Fund was established; Julia Connell of the Graduate School of Business acting as Chair of the Fund. In recognition of Harvey's ability to develop potential in people, it has been dubbed the 'Opportunity Knox' Scheme

In the interim of searching for a full time manager, Terry Askew, previously a HunterNet Board member, took on the role of Project Officer, fulfilling many of the tasks in interacting with HunterNet members and potential clients.

John Coyle took over the role of HunterNet Business Development Manager on the 29th of October 2001. Having served as board Chairman, he was already well versed in the aims and objectives of the Co-operative. With the direction of John Coyle, Peter Urch of Contrax Project Services expanded work on HunterNet projects, seeking information from a wide range of sources to build into a database of possible tenders for members, and to assist members generally with their ability to prepare and bid tenders. The project is funded through to November 2002 by the BHP Trust Fund. At the same time, the Hunter Valley Research Foundation was undertaking a study of the capabilities of manufacturing companies throughout the Hunter, building information for the Model for Action.

With John Coyle stepping down as HunterNet Chairman, the new board as of October 2001 consisted of:

Steven Smith – Chairman
Phil Hird – Vice Chairman
Ross Bolth
Bob Cowan
Eric Kreutzer
Stephen Kuzmik
Jeff Phillips



Phil Hird receives the 2001 Networking award from Chairman Steven Smith

CHAIRMAN'S AWARDS

Awarded in 2001 to:

Networking Award Tyton Conveyors
Innovation Award Adams Pneumatics

In addition, the Harvey Knox Memorial Award was presented to Joss De Iuliis

2002 ONWARDS

The key role of HunterNet has been the dissemination of information while providing enthusiasm and support for member development. The benefits of networking, particularly for small enterprises have been recognised as crucial for the Hunter region⁸.

The continued success of HunterNet is dependent on the commitment and participation of its members. While the role of HunterNet has often been perceived as a project leader or a source of work, the main advantage the network provides is to act as a source of information, for both clients and members. This function is likely to remain a key driver of the network in the future.

With the face of the Hunter Region changing, and the continual push for improvement, the next ten years will be an interesting time for the members of the Co-operative.

Planning for the Future

A 2-day conference was held in early 2002 to review the HunterNet Business Plan and to set in place strategies for the year ahead. These plans have centred in particular on working with other industry bodies and the project principles themselves to demonstrate the group capabilities and “one-stop” shop services our members can provide to companies expanding or setting up new operations in the region. By so doing, members obtain early exposure to the project’s decision makers and have the opportunity to work with them through the life of the project itself.

Over the last 12 months HunterNet has commissioned Peter Urch to establish a database project to produce information on new project opportunities as well as on-going work. This program, which was funded by the BHP Development Trust Fund, will continue over the next 12 months, with the data to be incorporated onto the HunterNet website, which has just undergone a major upgrade.

Other promotional literature is being prepared under this program to promote the strengths of the Hunter Manufacturing industry itself, and HunterNet’s role in this process.

The outcomes of the “Model for Action” study have provided valuable insights into the key factors which ensure companies survive and prosper through implementation of strategies for innovative programs. Recommendations for a further study are underway to implement the outcomes of the survey, to ensure that industry is aware of the issues and the methods to implement the funding throughout manufacturers in the Hunter.

The recently launched “Make it in the Hunter” program is a further initiative to keep as much work from the new projects within the Hunter, and to assist local companies in this process. Funded by the Hunter Area Consultative Committee (HACC), DSRD and HunterNet in conjunction with the HEDC, this project is a good example of the co-operative spirit which prevails amongst different bodies in our Region.

HUNTERNET CHAIRMAN 1992 - 2002

The HunterNet Co-operative acknowledges the enormous contributions to HunterNet by the following Chairman:



Joss De Iulius
Inaugural Chairman
1992 - 1995



John McColl
1995 - 1998



Bob Cowan
1998 - 2000



John Coyle
2000-2001



Steven Smith
2001 - Current

⁸ See, for example, Small Business Minister, Ms Sandra Nori, The Newcastle Herald, 29th Jan 2002.

CHAPTER 3 - INITIATIVES

MAJOR PROJECT INVOLVEMENT

HunterNet members have been involved in an extremely diverse and extensive range of projects in the Hunter Region.

Redbank Power Station

The Redbank Power Station project is a prime example of HunterNet contributing to a regional initiative, rather than to any specific member companies. HunterNet pushed for greater local industry involvement and supplied some of the major contracts through its members.

ADI Minehunter

Australian Defence Industries (ADI) won the \$1Billion contract to build six minehunters for the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). HunterNet acted as the single contact point for ADI to access major components and fittings for the project. Members working on the Minehunter include Maxwell Engineering, Cowan Manufacturing, Spunalo Castings and others, winning work to a value in excess of \$8million.

United Goninan Rail Projects

HunterNet has been extensively involved with a range of projects with Goninan throughout its history. The network has been able to supply and direct the region's manufacturing capability to Goninan on components used for major locomotive and freight rolling stock requirements, worth more than \$6million.

Following one of the Asian trade missions, HunterNet worked with the MT Rail Corporation in Hong Kong in September 1998. The project involved the refurbishment of freight rolling stock, with contributions from Maxwell Engineering, Treloar Group and Transform Composites.

Port Waratah Coal Services Coal Loader

Perth manufacturer Krupp won the contract to provide PWCS with the second major coal loader for Newcastle harbour. HunterNet members supplied major steel fabrications for the project worth \$1.4million.

Cargill Seed & Oil Plant

HunterNet members provided the manufacture and installation of elevator towers and associated structural steel work for the Cargill Seed & Oil Plant on Kooragang Island. The project demonstrated HunterNet's ability to work outside the traditional mining-type industries, and provided contract work in excess of \$300,000.

Rokop/Comsteel

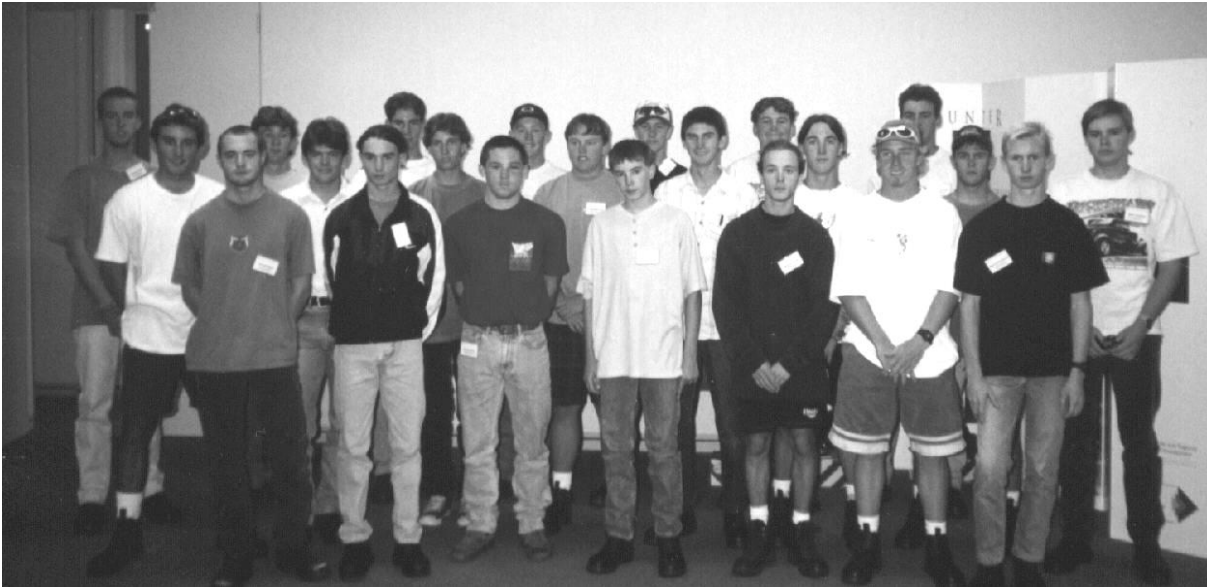
The provision of ladle cars and ingot withdrawal mechanisms for the continuous casting system installed at ComSteel. The contract work on this project was worth \$350,000 to members.

Protech Steel Mill

One of the more recent, and ongoing, projects with which HunterNet has been involved is the Protech Steel Mill. The total construction cost of stage one is estimated at \$600million. In addition to potential work being generated on the project itself, HunterNet continues to support the initiative as a regional contribution to the re-establishment of the steel industry in the Hunter.

HUNTERNET GROUP TRAINING COMPANY PTY LTD

The HunterNet Group Training Company (HNGTC) undertakes the recruitment of all its apprentices and trainees on behalf of its member companies. In this capacity, HNGTC runs the process of advertising, assessing and interviewing potential candidates. The HunterNet Co-operative owns all shares in HNGTC, and companies using apprentices through the scheme are typically members of the cooperative.



The first HNGTC apprentice intake, February 1997.

HNGTC was initially established to address three key factors present in the Hunter in 1996, namely the need to:

- >> Fill the training gap left by the loss of major programs run by organisations such as BHP, which traditionally provided a pool of skilled workers.
- >> Develop a collaborative approach to the development of training, between manufacturing companies and educators, particularly Hunter Institute of Technology (TAFE).
- >> Invest in the future of member companies and overcome emerging skill shortages in engineering and manufacture.

In essence, HNGTC employs, pays and trains apprentices, while they are hosted out to work with HunterNet companies (called parent companies). In this way, HNGTC is able to match and tailor training programs for employees whilst 'on the job', thereby fulfilling the desires of both the apprentices and the parent company. Many employees find employment with the parent company on completion of their training.

By undertaking the administration of a significant number of apprentices, HNGTC has been able to negotiate and develop training programs with TAFE specifically designed to suit the needs of member companies.

HNGTC acts as a point of first contact for apprentices, educators, as well as the parent companies. This provides a closer tie between employers and educators than had previously been possible – often neither knew how the development of apprentices was progressing outside their own confines. Further, the contact with HNGTC means that if necessary, it can act as a buffer or mediator between apprentices and parent companies.

By meeting these needs, HNGTC has become one of the major successes for the Co-operative, and continues to contribute to the industry and to the viability of HunterNet.

Wayne Gillett, having formerly worked in the manufacturing industry, was able to bring a range of technical skills to the Group Training Company during his period as manager (1996-2000). With more than a decade of experience with training and matching skills with jobs at DEET and Employment National, Murray Christie (2000 – present; with substantial contribution to the 1996 startup) has brought a different perspective to the company. He has been able to strengthen ties with educational institutes and other organisations.

Having accelerated the normal training period, Andrew Ward became the first graduate of the training company at the beginning of 2000, four months prior to his scheduled completion.



Andrew Ward (right) and Murray Christie at Newcastle Machine Shop

In an attempt to extend the scope of the training company, HunterNet has more recently pursued apprenticeships in the aviation field. To date, this program has met with mixed success, but has the potential to provide another source of employment and increase the knowledge skills base present in the Hunter Region.

Despite both shrinking supply of and demand for apprentices in the manufacturing industries over recent years, HunterNet continues to be a major contributor to training and employment in the region, now representing one of the largest suppliers of students for TAFE in the region.



The 2002 HNGTC intake, Murray Christie far right.

CHAPTER 4 - ROLE OF HARVEY KNOX IN HUNTERNET

When the members of HunterNet met formally in March 1992, Harvey Knox was representing Goninan. Having spent eleven years with Comsteel in Melbourne and Adelaide, he was at the time Marketing and Development Manager of A.Goninan & Co's Heavy Engineering Department⁹. Following the resignation of Ian Hissey as HunterNet manager after only six months, Harvey left Goninan to take on the full time role with HunterNet at the end of January 1995.

The role of Business Development Manager for HunterNet brings a unique set of challenges. The ability to hold the confidence of and relate to each of the individual HunterNet members means that the position effectively has 30 supervisors. What Harvey brought to the role of Manager was a range of personal skills and abilities that acted as a driving force for the direction of HunterNet, drawing together the vision of many.

Acting as a change agent was an important role for Harvey, stating that:

"HunterNet is breaking new ground in terms of networking theory and my task is to harness all of the energy of our members and present it to our customers in a form that they can understand."¹⁰

The key role of Harvey Knox's time as HunterNet manager was to raise the profile of the network to a national and even international level. He enjoyed moving HunterNet in a political arena, lobbying government departments and pushing for support across a range of organisations. Amongst the initiatives worked on by Harvey are the Model for Action and HNGTC, examined in other sections of this document. One of the most noteworthy political campaigns waged was the 1997 push for Federal Government support of the manufacturing industry, during the visit of Prime Minister Howard to the region.

Harvey was forward thinking and innovative in many ways, pushing for the Group Training Company to be established before major labour shortages began to appear. Fascinated by technology Harvey assisted in the development of the HunterNet website as soon as the technology became available.

Harvey was a gifted and entertaining public speaker and was sought after to address many business and community groups to spread the word of HunterNet. He had the flair and ability to hold the attention of an audience, and inspire them to think laterally.

After having been associated with HunterNet since the network was established in 1992, and providing a driving force as manager for six years, Harvey Knox died on 6 June 2001. He was 55.



His entrepreneurial outlook led a group of people to establish "The Opportunity Knox Fund" (OKF) in his memory to help others realise their potential and strive for their goals and dreams. The OKF has raised over \$70,000 and been able to assist nine recipients to improve their lives.

⁹ HunterNet Network News, First Quarter 1995.

¹⁰ Ibid., p4.

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In addition to the external sources, this document has been compiled with extensive reference to minutes of HunterNet Board and General Meetings, correspondence of HunterNet with members and other organisations, and interviews with many of the people who have been involved with the network in the last 10 years.

APPENDIX - HUNTERNET MEMBERSHIP 1992-2002

The HunterNet Co-operative consists of different levels of membership, which can be briefly divided into:

Members – Small-Medium engineering/manufacturing businesses operating from the Hunter Region.

Patrons – Large or externally centred manufacturing businesses that exist in the Hunter Region.

Sponsors – Support services (legal, financial, etc) in the Hunter.

Associates – Companies who have less than five employees, one-year membership subject to becoming Sponsor members.

Affiliates – Organisations interested in regional development (industry groups, educational institutes).

Organisations, which are involved with HunterNet at present, are designated as 'Current'. Organisations which were members when HunterNet was incorporated in December 1992 are designated as Founding members.

AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRIES (ADI) Limited	Current Patron
A G NATIONWIDE LABOUR SERVICES	Sponsor
A J MAYR ENGINEERING PTY LTD	Current Member
AUSTRALIAN AUTOMATION CENTRE	Current Member
ADVANCED MANAGEMENT GROUP	Sponsor
ADVANCED SYSTEMS INTEGRATION (ASI)	Member
ADVITECH Pty Ltd	Current Member
AON INSURANCE SERVICES	Sponsor
ALTARAL Pty Ltd	Member
AMPCONTROL	Founding Member
ANDERSON REA Pty Ltd	Founding Patron
BAE SYSTEMS AUSTRALIA	Current Member
BERENDSEN FLUID POWER	Current Member
BHP	Founding Patron
CCI POPE Pty Ltd	Current & Founding Member
CHAMBER OF MANUFACTURES OF NSW (Newcastle & Hunter Business Chamber)	Affiliate
CHOICE HR	Current Sponsor
CMPS&F Pty Ltd	Member
COMSTEEL	Member
CONNECT PERSONNEL	Current Sponsor
COWAN MANUFACTURING	Current & Founding Member
DEALQUIP NEWCASTLE	Current Member
DARACON	Member
DENIS HANCOCK & ASSOCIATES	Service
DEPARTMENT OF STATE & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DSARD)	Current Patron
ENERGYAUSTRALIA	Current Patron
ENVIROTECH	Member
ERNST & YOUNG	Sponsor
FORSYTHES	Current Sponsor
GHD	Current Member
GLASSTECH INDUSTRIES	Founding Member
GORWIL Pty Ltd	Founding Member
GRIFFITHS COMPUTERISED ENGINEERING (GCE)	Member
HCB MARINE Pty Ltd	Founding Member
HIBBLE INDUSTRIES	Current Member
HLA ENVIRONSCIENCES Pty Ltd	Member
HUNT & HUNT LAWYERS	Current Sponsor
HUNTER BUSINESS CHAMBER	Current Affiliate
HUNTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (HEDC)	Affiliate
HUNTER HYDRAULICS	Founding Member
HUNTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (TAFE)	Current Patron
INDUSTRIAL AUTOMATION SERVICES (IAS) Pty Ltd	Member
INDUSTRIAL GALVANIZERS	Current Member
INDUSTRIAL MAINTENANCE & FABRICATION (IMF) Pty Ltd	Current Member
INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES OFFICE (ISO) NSW	Current Affiliate
INDUSTRIAL SWITCHGEAR GROUP (ISG)	Founding Member
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (IDC)	Affiliate

J & T McARTHUR Pty Ltd	Member
JOHNSON SCREENS (AUSTRALIA)	Current & Founding Member
LAWLER PARTNERS	Current Sponsor
LONG-AIRDOX AUSTRALIA Pty Ltd	Patron
MANNESMAN DEMATIC	Patron
MAP MARKETING	Current Associate
MARKEY GROUP Pty Ltd	Current Sponsor
MATRIKON (Formally Hunter Control)	Current Member
MAXWELL ENGINEERING	Current Member
McEWAN & PARTNERS	Current Sponsor
MEADOW INDUSTRIES	Member
METALERT	Member
AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY GROUP	Affiliate
MICHEAL REYNOLDS & ASSOCIATES	Sponsor
MIM MANAGEMENT SERVICES	Current Associate Member
MULLANE & LINDSAY SOLICITORS	Sponsor
NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK (NAB)	Current Sponsor
NEWCASTLE FIELD MAINTENANCE Pty Ltd	Current Member
NEWCASTLE HYDRAULICS	Current Member
NEWCASTLE MACHINE SHOP	Current Member
NEWCASTLE PORT CORPORATION	Current Sponsor
NHP ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING PRODUCT	Current Member
NTD ENGINEERING Pty Ltd	Founding Member
NUPRESS TOOLS Pty Ltd	Member
PACIFIC POWER	Patron
POWER & MINING Pty Ltd	Current Member
PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS	Current Sponsor
PRIESTLEY ELECTRICAL Pty Ltd	Current Member
PWG KING & SONS Pty Ltd	Founding Member
QUAD ELECTRICAL Pty Ltd	Member
QUANTUM ENERGY SYSTEMS	Member
RAZER INDUSTRIES Pty Ltd	Current Member
RICHARDSON WHIPPER RECRUITMENT	Current Sponsor
ROCKET CONSTRUCTIONS	Current Member
SCORPION INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT Pty Ltd	Current Sponsor
SIMON HYDRAULICS & PNEUMATICS	Current Member
SPARKE HELMORE	Current Sponsor
SPUNALOY CASTINGS Pty Ltd	Member
SKILLED ENGINEERING	Sponsor
STEEL COATINGS & FABRICATIONS Pty Ltd	Current Member
STELFORM ENGINEERING	Current Member
TECHCEL COMPUTING SERVICES Pty Ltd	Sponsor
TERRACE FABRICATIONS Pty Ltd	Member
TETERIN ENGINEERING	Member
TOMAGO ALUMINIUM	Current Patron
TRANSFIELD CONSTRUCTION Pty Ltd	Patron
TRANSFORM COMPOSITES	Founding Member
TRAVELAND	Sponsor
TRELOAR GROUP PTY Limited	Current Member
TUBEMAKERS (Steel Division)	Patron
T W WOODS CONSTRUCTION	Member
TYTON CONVEYORS	Current Member
UNITED GONINAN	Current & Founding Patron
UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE	Current & Founding Patron
VARLEY	Current & Founding Member
WARATAH ENGINEERING	Current & Founding Member
WILSON & OLIVER ENGINEERING	Current Member
ZENER ELECTRIC Pty Ltd	Founding Member

This booklet has been compiled from information researched by

*Andrew William Eckford
Bbusiness (HONS 1)*

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<i>Joss De Iuliis</i>	<i>John McColl</i>
<i>Pam Fitzgibbon</i>	<i>Adam Randon</i>
<i>Ken Ford</i>	<i>Neville Sawyer</i>
<i>Denis Hancock</i>	<i>Dr John Stanton</i>
<i>Phil Hird</i>	<i>Peter Webster</i>
<i>Chris Huggins</i>	

Information in this report was compiled from records at HunterNet and by anecdotal stories as imparted by the many people interviewed.

If any person has inadvertently been excluded, HunterNet apologies.

This booklet is part of a larger, more detailed document as researched by Andrew Eckford. If any members require a full copy of the History of HunterNet or has information or data which they believe could be included please contact HunterNet 02 4908 7380.