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# terra firma

Annual Review 2010

a unique perspective



Excerpt from the 2010 Annual Review  
**CPC Human Interest Article**

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# THE ANNUAL JACKAROO AND JILLAROO DRIVE



Every year, CPC gives 60 young people a unique opportunity – the chance to be a jackaroo or jillaroo on one of its vast Australian cattle stations.

Some of these 'first years', as they are known, have grown up on family farms. Others come from the city with little or no experience of station life. All of them discover that their first mustering season is unlike anything they have done before.

Work starts before dawn and they spend weeks in stock camps living and working outdoors and sleeping under the stars. They make new friends, develop new skills and learn a huge amount about themselves. It is a life-changing experience that for many will help them to decide the course of their careers.

The first years start with an intensive training period at rural colleges to prepare them for the season ahead. At colleges in Katherine in the Northern Territory and Longreach in Central Queensland, they are put through their paces in everything from horsemanship skills, first aid and cattle handling theory to welding, health and safety, and general farm maintenance. On graduation, they head for their allotted CPC stations in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland.

When the first years arrive on station, their skill levels are assessed and the on-the-job training starts right away. It covers areas such as cattle mustering, drafting of yarded cattle, branding, fencing, bore maintenance, and horse and motorbike mustering skills. And with every station having its own way of working, there is site-specific training as well.

To keep skills sharp and ensure that every jackaroo and jillaroo understands how to stay safe on what is usually an isolated location, the educational work continues throughout the season. They are supervised by experienced personnel who have worked on cattle stations for many years – it is a mentoring role, but one that allows the individuals to take responsibility and use their initiative.

The jackaroos and jillaroos are an invaluable part of the CPC team and many stay on to take up roles as stockmen and stockwomen. Some go on to become senior managers in the company and it is a source of great pride that some of the leading figures in the industry started out as first years at CPC.

Whatever their ambitions for the future, these 60 young people learn a great deal about themselves in their 12 months at CPC, and the lessons they learn will stay with them for life.