

Friday, August 06, 2010

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. The Creative Industries Skills Council interacts with two national Skill Councils which including Innovation and Business Services Australia (IBSA) and Manufacturing Skills Australia (MSA).

The terms of reference for the inquiry include:

* The role and effectiveness of Industry Skills Councils in the operation of the national training system, particularly as it relates to states and territories, and rural and regional Australia.

Both Skill Councils are somewhat removed from state operation and implementation of the national training system. CISC often assists both national Skill Councils at state level for consultation purposes, industry networks and contacts with businesses, industry visits and CISC provides advice on implementation issues of national qualifications. CISC is heavily involved in the development of new training package qualifications to ensure Queensland industry needs are met. Both national Skill Councils provide opportunity for input into national training packages.

Both Skills Councils could liaise better with the Commonwealth to influence and guide governments listing of vocational skill shortage areas that better reflect State needs eg skill shortage in TCF Mechanic, better support Trade Recognition Australia regarding skills immigration approval of skills, task and duration of industry experience.

* Accountability mechanisms in relation to Commonwealth funding for the general operation and specific projects and programs of each Industry Skills Council;

The two Skill Councils are very frugal with their funds. No funds flow to the State Advisory Bodies as a part of their national operations. However IBSA reimburses CISC for national network consultation meetings however MSA will only cover half airfares hence rendering CISC unable to attend all national MSA meetings as cost come out of CISC's operational budget.

- * Corporate governance arrangements of Industry Skills Councils;

Unable to comment

- * Commonwealth Government processes to prioritize funding allocations across all Industry Skills Councils;

No comment

- * Industry Skills Council network arrangements and co-operative mechanisms implemented between relevant boards;

IBSA has been more effective in achieving network arrangements between CISC and IBSA Boards. There needs to be better coordination and collaboration between the national Skills Councils and state advisory bodies.

- * The accrual of accumulated surpluses from public funding over the life of each Industry Skills Council's operation and its use and purpose;

Unable to comment

- * The effectiveness of each Industry Skills Council in implementing specific training initiatives, for example, the Skills for Sustainability initiative under the National Green Skills Agreement; and

Both national Skills Councils have responded well however I was concerned in early days in that the national Skills Councils were slow off the mark. This may have been because they were waiting for extra funds to be released to do the job. IBSA was not leading regarding the harmonisation of licensing across their training packages. MSA was more aware of licensing issues however IBSA is coming on line with changes required as qualifications are reviewed.

- * Any related matters.

There needs to be greater national and state skill council similarity and cohesion regarding industry coverage and a more formal relationship between these organizations. State industry advisory bodies should be funded/contracted to act as national skill council agents as a part of their role in each state and territory. This would reduce duplication and effort. For example during CISC's recent regional industry visits, Industry Managers from MSA accompanied me where it came apparent we were asking the same questions and requiring the same industry intelligence. I believe communication and collaboration has



improved between national and state consultative bodies over the last 5 years but new understandings and arrangements should be considered.

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