

Ref: 271810212/2011

15 March 2011

Committee Secretary  
Senate Education, Employment and Workplace  
Relations Committees  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



**SERVICE SKILLS**  
AUSTRALIA

**The Industry Skills Council  
for the Service Industries**

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Dear members of the Education, Employment and Workplace  
Relations Legislation Committee

**RE: Inquiry into the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Bills 2010  
[2011]**

Service Skills Australia welcomes the move to establish the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (NVR) and believes that these bills are critical for developing greater national consistency and ensuring higher quality standards across the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

Service Skills Australia (SSA) believes that the standards contained in the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) would not be enhanced or benefit from being included in this legislation. Though there is a need to strengthen these standards, embedding such changes into the new legislation will only serve to create future difficulty when further modifications are required.

Instead, SSA believes there are more practical approaches to addressing higher quality standards through Industry Skills Councils. With industry's primary concern being improvements to the quality of training, SSA recently developed and began implementing its industry recognition system of RTOs. Known as the "Right Way" program, this acts as a means to addressing the need for high quality standards in facilities, resources, training and assessment.

Likewise, in response to industry's concerns on how the prevailing measures of success for VET are affecting the quality of the VET experience, SSA recently conducted a thorough investigation of student non-completions of courses. The final report for this project, "Evaluation Frameworks for VET", demonstrates that there are substantial benefits to knowing about short-term reasons for withdrawal that are not currently captured in the national VET data system. This highlights a profound weakness in the sector that is impeding quality outcomes for all—students, providers, policy makers and enterprises who invest in training.



Finally, Service Skills Australia contends that instituting the NVR is paramount to the success of up-skilling the nation's workforce and, subsequently, the productivity of the economy. Such a move will greatly facilitate the nation's ability to meet the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) targets seeking to encourage and enable increased educational attainment of more Australians through post-secondary qualifications.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeanette Allen", with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the signature.

Jeanette Allen  
Chief Executive Officer