



Submission to Inquiry into Industry Skills Councils

I would like to make a personal submission which is based on my experiences as a VET researcher, my collaboration with Industry Skills Councils in Australia and overseas on a number of research-related and other issues, and my experience as Executive Director of a State Industry Training Advisory Board in the period shortly before State ITABs lost their commonwealth funding.

My comments relate primarily to the first of the terms of reference: “the role and effectiveness of Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) in the operation of the national training system particularly as it relates to states and territories and rural and regional Australia”

Positive achievements of ISCs

Industry Skills Councils are an important and necessary part of the national training system. They provide a clear and designated link between industry and the training system at a national level. While there are many other links available, the presence of ISCs provides for a systematic and regulated link that would be impossible to replace if removed. Industry Skills Councils are present in other developed countries, eg the UK, Canada and New Zealand, and countries without such a system seem to struggle to develop appropriate relationships between their training systems and industry, particularly at national levels. It is pleasing to note that over recent years ISCs have been more appropriately resourced than previously, as in former times it was disturbing to witness the hand-to-mouth existence which prevented long-term strategic planning and made the recruitment of talented staff difficult because of the inability to offer certain long-term employment and career paths.

The system of national Training Packages is a considerable advantage for Australia. While Training Packages were not without significant teething problems and could still be improved, the basis of the system is well-established and has many advantages. Compared for example to the UK where NVQs must struggle against pre-existing proprietary qualification systems, Australia is in an enviable situation. ISCs’ work in this area is irreplaceable. The environmental scans which ISCs produce are also a good contribution to the national training system.

ISCs also form a valuable link with training systems overseas. Staff and Board members maintain relationships with relevant overseas bodies that are of considerable mutual benefit. I do not know if this is the case for all ISCs.

Possible areas for improvement

State/Territory networks

While at a national level ISCs are much better-resourced than previously, my impression (not based on systematic research) is that the State networks are quite variable in their coverage and resources. While it seems that the ISCs have attempted to maintain the coverage of the former State ITABs it seems that this has not been achieved presumably due to lack of sufficient funds. The former ITABs were very much hand-to-mouth operations that were dependent on short-term project funding for survival and it is difficult to maintain a professional State/Territory presence in such circumstances.

Too much ‘industry’ and not enough ‘training’?

While some people will argue the opposite case, my personal impression is that ISCs tend to be too much ‘the voice of industry’ rather than advocating for the training system. I understand the necessity

of this but believe that other bodies speak in other ways for the industries which ISCs deal with, and that ISCS should be enabled to speak more definitely for the VET system in their relationships with industry. The restricted nature of allowable features of Training Packages also prevents ISCs' advocacy for the VET system. For example, ISCs routinely worry about quality issues in the delivery and assessment of nationally-recognised training but do not have the power to address them.

Engaging stakeholders in smaller companies and non-metropolitan areas

In any case the voice of industry as expressed through ISC Boards tends to be the voice of those companies or bodies with the resources to allocate staff to such activities. ISCs certainly do their best to engage a broader range of industry representatives but in the end it is up to the companies and other bodies to volunteer their time and resources to the ISC. In a related, and not unimportant point, while rural and regional industry, and training providers, can contribute to ISCs in practice it is difficult to provide them with the same chance for input as metropolitan –based companies and bodies.

Engagement with university-level qualifications

While the coverage of the economy by ISCs and Training Packages is comprehensive there is something of a disconnect between ISCs' activities and Training Package qualifications and university education. Better links between VET-sector qualifications and university qualifications in related industry and professional areas needs to be based on curriculum development at early stages, which in the VET sector means Training Packages. While in some industry areas universities and professional bodies which accredit university courses have input into Training Package development this does not seem to be routine. Structured interactions between ISCs and bodies such as the Councils of Deans of relevant disciplines, and collectively between the ISCs and the Chairs of Academic Boards, would be advantageous for all and enable better pathways to be made available to learners. It has been ten years since the 'Carnegie report' suggested that pathways could be helpfully facilitated by Industry Skills Councils, or national ITABs as they were then and yet it does not seem that there has been a great deal of structured dialogue on this issue. Trying to implement linkages at provider level is quite difficult and is not often undertaken successfully.

Breadth of coverage

The final issue which I wish to address briefly is the broad coverage of the eleven ISCs. When ISCs were formed there was a reduction in the number of bodies compared with the previous national ITABs. While there were sound arguments for such an action, and also political issues that were addressed by this means, there do seem to be some disadvantages. I have spoken to industry representatives who feel that their industry has become 'lost' in a large skills council which covers many industries. Of course, ISCs are aware of this issue and implement systems to try to combat it, but it might be appropriate to consider whether better structures could be implemented to ensure that each industry is attended to. Any initiatives in this area should be preceded by an evaluation of smaller industries' views about ISCs, to establish the actual scale of the problem. In other countries, skills councils are more specialised. New Zealand, for example, has 39 Industry Training Organisations in a country with a much smaller population, although ITOs have a larger role than ISCs. I have attached as an Appendix a comparison of skills councils across four countries; this is a draft document only.

Erica Smith, Professor of Education, University of Ballarat
August 6th 2010

Reference Carnegie, J. 2000 *Pathways to Partnerships Qualification linkages between vocational education training and higher education*. Report and Draft policy guidelines of the ANTA/AV-CC joint study on credit transfer and articulation between the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE) sectors.

Parallels between industry Skills Council systems in four countries

Draft tables prepared by Ms Emma Siesmaa and Professor Erica Smith

Table 1. Listing of Industry skills councils in Australia, New Zealand, UK and Canada

Table 2. Comparison of Skills Councils of United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand with those in Australia

Table 1. Listing of Industry skills councils in Australia, New Zealand, UK and Canada

	Industry Skills Councils			
Country				
Australia	1. Agri-food Industry Skills Council - Food, beverages and pharmaceuticals - Rural and related industries - Meat processing - Seafood - Racing	2. Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council	3. Construction and Property Service Industry Skills Council - Property Services - Construction	4. ElectroComms and Energy Utilities Industry Skills Council ltd (EE-Oz Training Standards - Electrotechnology - Gas Sector - Generation Sector - Transmission, Distribution & Rail
	5. Forestry, Wood, Paper and Timber Products Industry Skills Council (ForestWorks) - Pulp and Paper Manufacturing - Forest and Forest Products	6. Government and Community Safety Industry Skills Council - Correctional Services - Water Industry - Public Safety - Public Sector - Local Government - Translating and Interpreting	7. Innovation and Business Industry Skills Council (Innovation and Business Skills Australia) - Business Services - Financial Services - Information & Communications Technology - Printing and Graphic Arts - Cultural and Related Industries - Education	8. Manufacturing Industry Skills Council - Manufacturing - Automotive Manufacturing - Automotive RS & R - Aerospace - Chemicals Hydrocarbons Refining - Competitive Manufacturing - Furnishing - Laboratory operations - Manufactured mineral products - Metal Engineering Boating - Plastics Rubber Cablemaking - Textiles Clothing Footwear
	9. SkillsDMC National Industry Skills Council	10. Services Industry Skills Council - Beauty	11. Transport & Logistics Industry Skills Council	

	- Drilling - Mining - Quarrying - Civil Infrastructure	- Community Pharmacy - Floristry - Funeral Services - Hairdressing - Holiday Parks and Resorts - Hospitality - Sport, Fitness & Recreation - Retail - Tourism - Wholesale	- Road Transport - Rail - Warehouse and Storage - Maritime - Aviation	
New Zealand	1. Agriculture Industry Training Organisation (Wellington)	2. Apparel and Textile Industry Training Organisation (Christchurch)	3. Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation (Wellington)	4. Boating Industry Training Organisation (Auckland)
	5. Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (Wellington)	6. Building Service Contractors of New Zealand Incorporated (Wellington)	7. Communications and Media Industry Training Organisation (Lower Hutt)	8. Community Support Services ITO Limited (Christchurch)
	9. Competenz (Auckland)	10. Creative Trades Industry Training Organisation Incorporated (Wellington)	11. Electricity Supply Industry Training Organisation (Hamilton)	12. ElectroTechnology Industry Training Organisation (Auckland)
	13. Fire and Rescue Services Industry Training Organisation (Wellington)	14. Forest Industries Training and Education Council (FITEC) (Auckland)	15. Funeral Service Training Trust of New Zealand (Head Office)	16. Hospitality Standards Institute (Wellington)
	17. InfraTrain New Zealand (Wellington)	18. Joinery Industry Training Organisation (Wellington)	19. Local Government Industry Training Organisation (Wellington)	20. New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (Christchurch)
	21. New Zealand Industry Training Organisation (Hamilton)	22. New Zealand Seafood Industry Council Limited (Wellington)	23. New Zealand Sports Turf Industry Training Organisation (Palmerston North)	24. NZ Equine Industry Training Organisation (Bulls)
	25. NZ Extractive Industries Training Organisation (Christchurch)	26. NZ Flooring Industry Training Organisation (Ashurst)	27. NZ Hairdressing Industry Training Organisation Inc (Wellington)	28. NZ Motor Industry Training Organisation Incorporated (Wellington)
	29. Opportunity - The Training Organisation (Lower Hutt)	30. Pharmacy Industry Training Organisation (Wellington)	31. Plastics and Materials Processing Industry Training Organisation Incorporated (Auckland)	32. Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying ITO Ltd (Wellington)
	33. Public Sector Training Organisation (Wellington)	34. REINZ Industry Training Organisation (Auckland)	35. Retail Institute (Wellington)	36. Retail Meat Industry Training Organisation Inc (Thorndon)
	37. Skills Active Aotearoa Limited (Wellington)	38. Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi Social Services Industry Training Organisation Inc (Wellington)	39. Tranzqual ITO (Wellington)	

United Kingdom	1. Asset + Skills	2. Go Skills- Moving skills forward	3. People First	4. Skill Set
	5. Cogent Skills for Science Based Industries	6. Government Skills	7. Proskills- making skills work	8. Skills for Health
	9. Construction Skills	10. The Institute of Motor Industry	11. Senta	12. Skills for Justice- Developing Skills for Safer Communities
	13. Creative and Cultural Skills	14. Improve- Food and drink Sector Skills Council	15. Skill Fast- UK	16. Skills for Logistics
	17. E-Skills UK	18. Lantra	19. Skills Active- Shaping skills for the future	20. Skillsmart Retail
	21. Energy and Utility Skills	22. Lifelong Learning- UK	23. Skills for Care & Development	24. Summit Skills
	25. Financial Services Skills Council			
Canada	1. Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council of Canada	2. Apparel Human Resources Council	3. BioTalent Canada	4. Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council
	5. Canadian Apprenticeship Forum	6. Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council	7. Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council	8. Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters
	9. Canadian Food Industry Council	10. Canadian Plastics Sector Council	11. Canadian Printing Industries Sector Council (CPISC)	12. Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress
	13. Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council (CSCSC)	14. Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council	15. Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council	16. Child Care Human Resources Sector Council
	17. Construction Sector Council	18. Contact Centre Canada	19. Council for Automotive Human Resources	20. Cultural Human Resources Council
	21. Electricity Sector Council	22. Environmental Careers Organization of Canada (ECO)	23. Forest Products Sector Council	24. Forum for International Trade Training
	25. Human Resource Council for the Voluntary/Non-Profit Sector (HRVS)	26. Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC)	27. Mining Industry Human Resource Council (MiHR)	28. Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada

	29. National Seafood Sector Council	30. Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada	31. Police Sector Council	32. Textiles Human Resources Council
	33. The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC)	34. Wood Manufacturing Council		

Table 2. Comparison of Skills Councils of United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand with those in Australia

COUNTRY			
Australia	United Kingdom	Canada	New Zealand
<p>1. Agri-food Industry Skills Council - Food, beverages and pharmaceuticals - Rural and related industries - Meat processing - Seafood - Racing</p>	<p>Improve- Food and drink Sector Skills Council - Food and Drinks Manufacturing and processing</p>	<p>BioTalent Canada</p> <p>Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council</p> <p>Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters</p> <p>Canadian Food Industry Council</p> <p>National Seafood Sector Council</p>	<p>Agriculture Industry Training Organisation - Agriculture - Pest Management - Pork Production - Poultry Production - Water Industry - Wool Harvesting</p> <p>New Zealand Industry Training Organisation - Dairy manufacturing industry - Animal Product Examination Services - Meat processing industry (excluding poultry) - Leather Manufacturing - Meat Inspection Services - The baking yeasts manufacturing industry - Fellmongery</p> <p>New Zealand Seafood Industry Council Limited - Maritime - Seafood - Seafood Māori</p> <p>NZ Equine Industry Training Organisation - Equine - Greyhound Racing Industry - Sports Turf - Racing broadcasting and programming - Race day and TAB operations</p>

			New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation - Horticulture and florist industries
2. Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council - Community Services - Health	Skills for Health - UK Health Skills for Care & Development - Social Care - Children - Early Years & Young People’s Workforces in the UK	Child Care Human Resources Sector Council Human Resource Council for the Voluntary/Non-Profit Sector (HRVS)	Community Support Services ITO Limited - - Cleaning and Caretaking - Community Support - Home and Life Sciences Human Services - Mental Health - Disability industry (including physical, sensory, psychiatric and intellectual) - Age related industries - Epilepsy New Zealand - Social Services Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi Social Services Industry Training Organisation Inc - Social Services
3. Construction and Property Service Industry Skills Council - Property Services - Construction	Asset + Skills - Property - Facilities Management - Housing - Cleaning Construction Skills - Construction Summit Skills - Building Services Engineering	Construction Sector Council	Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation - Building and construction - Fibrous plastering - Solid plastering - Tiling - Cement and concrete Opportunity - The Training Organisation - Power crane industry - Power-operated elevating work platform industry Building Service Contractors of New Zealand Incorporated - Contract cleaning industry - Urban pest management industry

Joinery Industry Training Organisation
- Joinery

REINZ Industry Training Organisation
- Real Estate industry

InfraTrain New Zealand
- Road construction
- Civil Engineering
- Civil Plant Operation and Management
- Civil Works and Services
- Design
- Highway Construction and Maintenance
- Pavement Surfacing
- Property Consultation and Valuation
- Quantity Surveying
- Rural Contracting
- Surveying

**4. ElectroComms and Energy Utilities
Industry Skills Council ltd (EE-Oz
Training Standards**
- Electrotechnology
- Gas Sector
- Generation Sector
- Transmission, Distribution & Rail

Energy and Utility Skills
- Energy
- Waste
- Utilities

Electricity Sector Council

**Electricity Supply Industry Training
Organisation**
- Electrical Engineering
- Electricity Supply
- Electronic Engineering
- Electronics Technology
- Energy and Chemical Plant
- Management of power systems and assets

**ElectroTechnology Industry Training
Organisation**
- Electrotechnology
- Telecommunications
- Security
- Offender management
- Computing contact centres

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ambulance - Financial services <p>Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying ITO Ltd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying
<p>5. Forestry, Wood, Paper and Timber Products Industry Skills Council (Forest Works)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pulp and Paper Manufacturing - Forest and Forest Products 	<p>Lantra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental & Land-based 	<p>Forest Products Sector Council</p> <p>Environmental Careers Organization of Canada (ECO)</p> <p>Wood Manufacturing Council</p>	<p>Forest Industries Training and Education Council (FITEC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Management Forestry - Furniture - Pulp and Paper Manufacturing - Solid Wood Manufacturing - Solid Wood Processing - Wood Fibre Manufacturing - Wood Handling and Distribution - Wood Manufacturing - Generic Skills - Wood Panels Manufacturing - Wood Processing Technology - Biosecurity (border quarantine)
<p>6. Government and Community Safety Industry Skills Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Correctional Services - Water Industry - Public Safety - Public Sector - Local Government - Translating and Interpreting 	<p>Government Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Central Government <p>Skills for Justice- Developing Skills for Safer Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policing & Law Enforcement - Youth Justice - Custodial Care - Community Justice - Courts Services 	<p>Police Sector Council</p>	<p>Fire and Rescue Services Industry Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community and Workplace Fire and Emergency Management - Fire and Rescue Services - Specialist Rescue <p>Local Government Industry Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local government - Civil Defence <p>Public Sector Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offices of Parliament - Crown Entities defined as Crown Agents - State-owned Enterprise

<p>7. Innovation and Business Industry Skills Council (Innovation and Business Skills Australia)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Services - Financial Services - Information & Communications Technology - Printing and Graphic Arts - Cultural and Related Industries - Education 	<p>Creative and Cultural Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertising - Crafts - Music - Performing - Heritage - Design & Arts <p>E-Skills UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IT - Telecoms <p>Lifelong Learning- UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Learning - Education - FE & HE - Libraries - Work-based Learning - Training Providers <p>Financial Services Skills Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial Services - Accountancy - Finance <p>Skill Set</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TV, Film, Radio - Interactive Media - Animation - Computer Games - Facilities - Photo Imagining 	<p>Canadian Printing Industries Sector Council (CPISC)</p> <p>Cultural Human Resources Council</p> <p>Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council of Canada</p> <p>Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC)</p> <p>Contact Centre Canada</p>	<p>Communications and Media Industry Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graphic design - Fibreboard Packaging - Journalism - Print production - Digital communications <p>Creative Trades Industry Training Organisation Incorporated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sign writing - Bricklaying - Graphic Arts - Masonry and stonemasonry - Painting and Decorating <p>Community Support Services ITO Limited</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adult Education and Training
<p>8. Manufacturing Industry Skills Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manufacturing - Automotive Manufacturing 	<p>Cogent Skills for Science Based Industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chemical & Pharmaceutical - Oil 	<p>Apparel Human Resources Council</p>	<p>Apparel and Textile Industry Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clothing Manufacture

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Automotive RS & R - Aerospace - Chemicals Hydrocarbons Refining - Competitive Manufacturing - Furnishing - Laboratory operations - Manufactured mineral products - Metal Engineering Boating - Plastics Rubber Cablemaking - Textiles Clothing Footwear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gas - Nuclear - Petroleum - Polymers <p>Proskills- making skills work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building products - Coatings - Extractive and Mineral Processing - Furniture - Furnishings and Interiors - Glass and Glazing - Glazed Ceramics - Paper and Pulp - Printing <p>16. The Institute of Motor Industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail Motor Industries <p>17. Skill Fast- UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fashion - Textiles <p>23. Sema</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Science - Engineering - Manufacturing Technologies 	<p>Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council</p> <p>Council for Automotive Human Resources</p> <p>Canadian Plastics Sector Council</p> <p>Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress</p> <p>Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council (CSCSC)</p> <p>Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada</p> <p>Textiles Human Resources Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Footwear and Leather Trades - Industrial Machine Knitting - Textiles Manufacture - Dry cleaning and laundry <p>Boating Industry Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boating Industries <p>NZ Extractive Industries Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drilling Industry - Extractive Industries - Gas Industry - Hot Dip Galvanizing - Resource Recovery - Solid Waste <p>NZ Flooring Industry Training Organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flooring industry <p>NZ Motor Industry Training Organisation Incorporated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industrial Textile Fabrication - Motor Industry - Outdoor Fabric Products <p>Plastics and Materials Processing Industry Training Organisation Incorporated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cablemaking - Coatings, Inks, and Adhesives - Plastics Processing Technology - Glass production - Pharmaceutical manufacturing sector <p>Competenz</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mechanical and manufacturing
--	---	---	--

- engineering and fabrication
- Food and beverage manufacturing
- Steel manufacturing
- Chemical product manufacturing
- Cosmetics and toiletry preparation manufacturing
- Soap and other detergent manufacturing
- Locksmithing and gunsmithing industries
- Maritime industry
- Rail operations industry

9. Services Industry Skills Council

- Beauty
- Community Pharmacy
- Floristry
- Funeral Services
- Hairdressing
- Holiday Parks and Resorts
- Hospitality
- Sport, Fitness & Recreation
- Retail
- Tourism
- Wholesale

People First

- Hospitality
- Leisure
- Travel
- Tourism

Skills Active- Shaping skills for the future

- Sport & Recreation
- Health and Fitness
- Outdoors
- Playwork
- Caravanning Industry

Skillsmart Retail

- Retail

Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council

Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation

- Aviation
- Museum Services
- Tourism
- Travel

Hospitality Standards Institute

- Hospitality (accommodation, bars, clubs, restaurants, food services, quick service restaurants)

New Zealand Sports Turf Industry Training Organisation

- Sports turf industry

NZ Hairdressing Industry Training Organisation Inc

- Hair and beauty industry

Pharmacy Industry Training Organisation

- Dispensing and preparation of pharmaceutical products
- Provision of advice on illness preparation
- Selection and sale of non-prescription medicines
- Therapies, diagnostic and therapeutic aids

			<p>in the pharmacy setting - Pharmacy Services</p> <p>Retail Institute - Retail and wholesale industry</p> <p>Retail Meat Industry Training Organisation Inc - Retail meat industries</p> <p>Skills Active - Sports, Fitness and Recreation Industry - Snowsport industry</p> <p>Funeral Service Training Trust of New Zealand - Funeral industry</p>
<p>10. SkillsDMC National Industry Skills Council - Drilling - Mining - Quarrying - Civil Infrastructure</p>		<p>Mining Industry Human Resource Council (MiHR)</p>	<p>NZ Extractive Industries Training Organisation - Drilling Industry - Extractive Industries - Gas Industry - - Metalliferous Mining - Petrochemical Industry</p>
<p>11. Transport & Logistics Industry Skills Council - Road Transport - Rail - Warehouse and Storage - Maritime - Aviation</p>	<p>Go Skills- Moving Skills Forward - Passenger Transport</p> <p>Skills for Logistics - Freight Logistics - Wholesaling Industry</p>	<p>Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council</p> <p>Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council</p> <p>Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada</p>	<p>Tranzqual ITO - Commercial Road Transport - Road transport logistics industry - Stevedoring and Ports Industry</p>

