



**QUEENSLAND  
AUTOMOTIVE SKILLS ALLIANCE**  
'FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE'

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

**Re: Inquiry to Industry Skills Councils**

The Queensland Automotive Skills Alliance (QASA) Pty Ltd is the peak industry body responsible for the provision of strategic skills and training advice to the Queensland Government in the Automotive Retail, Service and Repair (RS&R) industry.

QASA consistently engages with the state government on matters of regulatory advice, skills formation for the whole of the automotive industry and a wide range of RS&R specific matters. QASA members have been active partners in the national process of training package development and review.

QASA understands Industry Skills Councils (ISC) are charged with the national workforce development agenda of their representative industries and work with enterprises and industry stakeholders to identify and address workforce issues, and in developing and maintaining the national training qualifications.

QASA has established a strong working relationship with its ISC, Manufacturing Skills Australia (MSA) and has provided high quality advice and support in line with the requirements of the Queensland automotive industry to validate information from a national perspective.

MSA have been extremely proactive since early 2009 in their approach to provide support when they took on the responsibility for the Automotive Industry Retail, Service and Repair (AUR) Training Package from its predecessor, Automotive Training Australia (ATA).

MSA's communication mechanisms have provided industry will ample opportunity to provide feedback concerning industry trends and involvement in the AUR training package.

I believe MSA have shown strong engagement with state and territory stakeholders to ensure our industry areas needs are represented when taken to form a national agenda. The continuation of QASA's involvement with MSA will help the automotive industry to navigate a future that is likely to include a reinvention of jobs, technologies and supply chains in response to social, economic and environmental priorities.

As a result of this involvement, MSA had also developed a continuous improvement plan of the Automotive Industry Retail, Service and Repair training package and environmental scan identifying workforce development needs of the automotive industry. This process had identified a direction in which the industry was heading and inherently what the training package should reflect.

The overall process in which MSA has conducted its business from QASAs prospective has been excellent. However, an element that has caused some frustration is the governance process of MSA -

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albeit this was not their decision. In late 2009, the Federal Government had, through a review by the Hon. Steve Bracks, provided recommendations on the operational model for the Automotive industry training advisory arrangements. This moved to focus the automotive training effort to a wholly owned subsidiary of MSA to take over responsibility for training advisory arrangements for the automotive industry.

This has taken a long time to sort out and is still yet to be finalised. This process has continued to delay the Automotive RS&R industry a timely review process of the training package and thus the training package is not as responsive to industry needs as it should be. Although, it must be said that MSA have done extremely well in updating relevant stakeholders through this process considering the circumstances they face during this transition.

In summary, QASA will continue to cooperate, support and participate actively with MSA. Research and experience has demonstrated that an industry-led training system will mean a more responsive and flexible system that is more closely aligned to the training demands of industry. The strength of Industry Skills Councils is to be applauded from this point alone. However, as the automotive industry is truly dynamic, and it can be easily argued that compared with most other industries its demand for contemporary and ongoing training for both new entrants and existing workers is at the forefront and thus requires a clear direction of operation and high level of responsiveness from industry.

**PAUL KULPA  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
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