



**Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Submission
to the Inquiry into Industry Skills Councils 2010**

A member of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI) is Tasmania's largest peak employer body. TCCI through its membership represents over 2500 employers (employing over 20% of the workforce) and has relationships with numerous industry associations and stakeholders across the state. As an independent organisation, the TCCI undertakes to:

- Shape sustainable and profitable social, economic and environmental conditions;
- Advocate and promote policies addressing contemporary business issues in public forums; and
- Provide relevant business services to Members and the broader business community.

The TCCI is constituted by a Board of Directors which is supported by a number of subcommittees; the Employment, Education, Training and Skills (EETS) Committee is one of these. The EETS has representation from all major industry sectors in the state and considers policy and developments within the employment, education, training and skills arena. The EETS has informed this submission.

EETS Committee Members are generally representing the stakeholders of their industry association or employer (including 'like' employers). Committee Members are informed through their industry membership and direct consultation with industry. The TCCI is also informed by its members and through its consultation with business on education and training issues, this includes feedback on ISCs.

Of the 11 Industry Skills Councils (ISCs), two have representatives based in Tasmania; they are SkillsDMC and ForestWorks. These two organisations have a strong presence within industry and with relevant vocational education and training (VET) stakeholders. As a direct result of these ISCs, Employers have benefited from the Productivity Place Program (PPP) and Enterprise Based Productivity Places Program (EBPPP) funding. Employers have noted that they are well informed by their ISC and have effective working relationships.

With exception to these two organisations, ISCs are not generally easily accessible for employers. Employers and stakeholders are often unfamiliar with ISC activities such as consultation, and projects being undertaken. A presence is not consistently felt within their respective industries.

Ongoing change within the VET sector makes it difficult for employers to keep abreast of developments and opportunities within their industry. Constant change and the complexity of the VET sector requires ISCs to have a strong presence within industry to ensure products such as Training Packages are developed to meet their needs.

The economic climate in Tasmania is often quite different to that of other states and therefore the state's training needs also vary. Similar to some other states, Tasmania does not have Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs), therefore ISCs cannot utilise this source of industry advice. Without thorough consultation the needs of the state cannot be accurately reflected by ISCs.

With minimal events such as implementation workshops and consultation sessions in Tasmania and minimal if any, representation on ISCs Boards, there is a real potential for the needs of Tasmania not to be represented by ISCs.

In summary, the current ISC arrangements, with exception to SkillsDMC and ForestWorks, are not sufficient to reflect the needs of Tasmania given the lack of industry presence. The TCCI strongly supports ISC representation based in Tasmania and the maintenance of current efforts in the state.