

INQUIRY INTO INDUSTRY SKILLS COUNCILS – WESTERN AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SUBMISSION

The Department of Education is providing comment on the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) *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;*

The change of focus for Industry Skills Councils which has occurred during the last two years has made their role and input to schools delivering VET programs more visible and relevant.

The VET in Schools Branch, within the Department of Education, has had considerable contact with the following ISCs:

- AgriFoods Skills Australia;
- Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council;
- Forest Works;
- Manufacturing Skills Australia; and
- Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council Ltd.

This contact has been directly with VET in Schools officers and through the Enterprise and Vocational Education (EVE) Coordinators who work at the education district level with public schools.

The ISCs mentioned above, have been very prominent in the schools sector in terms of promoting their industries and the viable employment and training pathways for young people within them. The information they have disseminated has been viewed by schools as contemporary and user-friendly for teachers, VET deliverers and students.

The ISCs have also developed some very good resources, especially in the area of literacy. These resources have linked directly to the training packages and competencies to be delivered. In particular the WA Colleges of Agriculture have worked extensively with the literacy resources developed by AgriFoods Skills Australia. The feedback has been very positive. The resources meet the literacy needs of the students and the instructional needs of the trainers, as they link the literacy skills required in the industry to the skills the students are developing through their training.

The ISCs have been visible in working with the local Industry Training Councils (ITCs). Public schools and the Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) with which they partner, find this collaboration beneficial. It results in less duplication of effort and makes the information and support received more readily available and relevant to schools.

This work with the local ITCs in terms of identifying career and employment pathways has also included the exploration by Western Australian public schools of workforce development programs supported by the ISCs in other states. Examples include:

- ForestWorks Ltd's Timber Truss and Frame Design and Manufacture qualifications pathway in Queensland; and
- Agrifoods Skills Council's support to expand the Queensland Department of Education and Training's Agribusiness Gateway School Model.

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

The VET in Schools Branch ensures that, where applicable, the concept of sustainability and Green Skills is built into new VET pathways and programs that are being developed for public schools. Schools and organisations proposing new training initiatives for students are encouraged to link in with the information and support from the relevant ISCs, particularly regarding their development and inclusion of sustainability units of competency for all training packages.