

Patron  
Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO  
Governor of New South Wales

5<sup>th</sup> August, 2010

Committee Secretary  
Senate Education,  
Employment and Workplace  
Relations Committee  
P O Box 6100  
Parliament House  
**CANBERRA, ACT 2600**

Dear Sir,

**Re: Inquiry into Industry Skills Councils**

We refer to the above and wish to submit this Institution's views on the operation and effectiveness of the particular Industry Skills Council which affects the operations of Surveyors, being the Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council.

The supply of well trained para-professionals is vital for the efficient operation of the Surveying profession whose members we represent in NSW, and we therefore have a great concern that the Skills Council should appropriately recognise the needs of industry in the delivery of training packages for para-professionals who will ultimately, after appropriate experience and demonstration of competency, become an integral of our profession.

In order to provide some background to our involvement, the following facts are pertinent. The NSW Institution of Engineering & Mining Surveyors (NSWIEMS), representing para-professional surveyors, merged with the Institution of Surveyors NSW (ISNSW) in 2008. The resultant merged entity now represents all professional and para-professional surveyors in NSW. Both ISNSW and NSWIEMS had representatives to the Surveying and Mapping Industry Council of NSW (SMIC). ISNSW now sends two delegates to that body. SMIC is a member of the NSW Construction Industry Training Advisory Board (NSWCITAB) which provides information & advice to the Federal Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council (CPSISC).

In recent years there has been a degree of dissatisfaction and frustration experienced by NSWCITAB, SMIC, NSWIEMS and ISNSW regarding the inadequacy of reviews of training packages and consultation with industry by CPSISC. Representations were made to CPSISC by SMIC in February, 2006 and by NSWIEMS to the Minister for Vocational and Further Education in February and March, 2007.

However we do not believe these representations were adequately considered and the National Quality Council subsequently approved what appears to be a seriously flawed Training Package based on support letters provided by CPSISC to State bodies without the relevant Training Package documents. There is evidence of dissatisfaction with the results from other States apart from NSW.

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**SURVEYING ..... OPEN UP YOUR WORLD**



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We are also advised that questions have been raised as to why tenders or expressions of interest were not called for by CPSISC for preparation of the training package by suitably qualified organisations other than Skills Victoria.

Apart from the flawed processes that appear to be employed by CPSISC, our principal concern is that the composition of the Council is heavily weighted to TAFE teacher representatives. The combination of the relative lack of industry representation with inadequate broader industry consultation, results in development of training packages of a lesser standard than required by the surveying industry.

With increasing financial accountability, TAFE and other Registered Training Organisations will choose to offer modules which are easier to teach and fund, to the detriment of packages which provide the skills and knowledge required by industry. We have seen this recently in NSW with the introduction of Certificate III & IV level courses which do not offer the level of knowledge provided by the Diploma course.


Other concerns include the failure of a National Training Package to address the different State Laws and Regulations which affect surveying practice in each State and the inclusion of modules from other training packages as core content rather than elective content, e.g. first aid and 4 wheel drive vehicle driving, which diminish the education content related to surveying.

We believe that the best interests of both the industry and the community would be best served by CPSISC acting as a coordinating body. The responsibility for developing Training Packages should be undertaken by a Committee of equal numbers of representatives of industry and TAFE. The National Quality Council needs to be more independent of Skills Councils and not just the "rubber stamp" of Skills Council recommendations.

Further information regarding this submission is available from the Chairman of the ISNSW Engineering & Mining Surveying Group, Mr Norman Mann

We trust that our above comments will be accepted as constructive efforts to improve the delivery of effective training packages for future employees of the surveying industry, which is essential to the further development of Australia.

Yours faithfully,

 John R. Minehan MISNSW  
President,  
Institution of Surveyors NSW Inc

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