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### Inquiry into Industry Skills Councils

The Sustainable Energy Association of Australia Inc. (SEA) is one of Australia’s largest energy chambers.

SEA is a membership-based group of enterprises providing the commercial solution to climate change through their products and services, or that aspire to be more sustainable in their own energy use, inclusive of businesses offering or using services and products that manage or offset greenhouse gas emissions in transition to sustainable energy use.

SEA constitutional objectives include “Increasing employment opportunities in a sustainable energy industry across and within all regions of Australia, contributing to a sustainable future for Australia...”

Formal training at tertiary and VET levels covers a number of key skill areas relevant to sustainable energy interests, such as renewable energy systems design and installation. However, due to its relatively new and developing status, much of the skills acquisition in the industry is currently done on-the-job with some limited professional development short course and in-house training available.

There is a risk that the available skills are not of a suitable standard or quality, and that may result in risks to both businesses wanting to ensure value to customers, and to consumers, both business and domestic, who should be able to expect reliable products and services. Furthermore a skills shortage in any sector will inflate prices, and so in the sustainable energy arena, impede an increase in the

SEA Corporate members



affordability of sustainability measures, at a time when conditions are sound for industry growth, and when the need for a rapid response to climate change is paramount.

Training and accreditation in any industry and across all sectors should avoid restrictive regulatory approaches that reduce innovation and flexibility in the delivery of training. For example, under the current circumstances, the Renewable Energy Certificate Regulations enshrine the Clean Energy Council (CEC) accreditation as the only mechanism for the accreditation of Small Generation Unit (SGU) installers. This has caused a private organisation to be a de-facto statutory monopoly on the approval of training and accreditation of SGU installers.

Maintaining openness in accredited training through RTOs, both public and private, is needed for future industry development and a monopoly on accreditation training, or the licensing of such training, should be avoided. This will help to ensure that there is adequate local training and support for entry into the industry and that future skills needs remain met in the most efficient manner possible.

SEA lobbies for substantive action at local, state and national levels on sustainable energy across all areas and sectors of Australia's economy.

SEA has a strong reputation for authoritative commentary and advocacy on a broad range of energy efficiency and sustainable energy issues, including submissions and media releases – many examples of our contribution can be found on our website.

Many businesses are acting to support the development of the best policy outcomes for the industry by becoming SEA members. SEA has almost 400 members from a diversity of enterprises and industries. This range of companies, businesses, organisations and individuals are involved in sustainable energy practices and including energy efficiency across government, business and the community in: infrastructure; architecture and design of buildings and homes; transport; performance of appliances, vehicles, machinery, and industrial processes; use of renewable energy passively, in support of process and in electricity generation.

SEA is the only business peak body in Australia actively supporting comprehensive action on all aspects of sustainable energy in Australia's economy.

SEA is a key advocate for efforts from individuals and enterprises contributing to the solution of climate change, and works to support actions that assist the community to use energy more sustainably and act on global warming.

Yours sincerely

Prof Ray Wills  
Chief Executive Officer  
Sustainable Energy Association of Australia Inc. (SEA)

#### **SEA 2030 VISION**

30% energy generation from sustainable sources and 30% reduction of existing use through energy efficiency by 2030

#### **SEA – Australia's peak body for sustainable energy**

SEA promotes the development and adoption of sustainable energy technologies and services that minimise the use of energy through sustainable energy practices and maximise the use of energy from sustainable sources.