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CA034-07

JK/jc

Submission No. 83

Date Received.....

2 May 2007

The Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

RECEIVED
07 MAY 2007
BY: MIG

Dear Sir/Madam

It has been brought to our attention that this Institute has been referred to in a submission by the Australian Meat Industry Employees' Union to the Joint Standing Committee, dated February 2007. The Institute wishes to comment on some of the statements in that submission relating to offshore training and assessment undertaken by us in 2005 and 2006.

Meat Training Australia (MTA) is a specialist training centre of South West Institute of TAFE, established with Victorian Government support in 2002. MTA has developed considerable expertise in training and assessing workers for the meat processing industry and operates in a number of Australian states. In the past two years, MTA has expanded its specialist training services to include the assessment and credentialing of overseas workers who may be eligible for temporary entry and stay in Australia under the 457 Business (Temporary Stay) visa regime.

Since mid-2005 MTA has offered training and assessment to Certificate III in Meat Processing (Slaughtering) standard to over 700 workers in China, and we believe many of those assessed have subsequently been approved by DIAC and are now working in Australia on 457 visas.

Our delivery model in China involves a rigorous three to six week training program. By working in conjunction with experienced labour hire companies and limiting our training to offshore workers who have a minimum of five years experience in the meat processing industry, we have been able to conduct an accelerated program entailing:

- pre-observation of potential students to verify the level of current competency (those who do not meet the required standard are excluded at this point)
- intensive classroom delivery focused on skills gaps (such as Australian standards of OHS), using print and digital resources in both English and Mandarin
- on-site/on-plant assessment of skills for the practical modules.

Throughout all aspects of the delivery and assessment we employ professional translators to work with our qualified teachers.

Our offshore programs have been audited by the Government of South Australia and found to comply with all requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework (see attached).

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The AMIEU submission claims that MINTRAC refused to endorse MTA's work in China (Item 40 of the submission). This is incorrect. In January 2006 we asked MINTRAC to observe and make constructive comment about the various processes of delivery with a view to ensuring quality in the off shore delivery. There was no suggestion of requesting endorsement from MINTRAC, rather MTA recognises their skills and expertise in the meat industry and we would have welcomed their input on this matter. A copy of the MINTRAC response is enclosed. MTA also engaged in discussions with several other Registered Training Organisations to assist with validation of our processes. In doing so, MTA complied with AQTF and training package guidelines by inviting other RTOs and MINTRAC into meaningful discussions about off shore delivery.

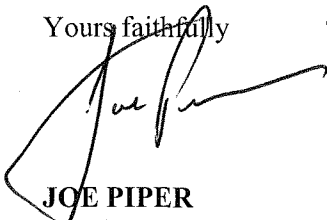
The AMIEU submission also contains a statement that our training and assessment is species specific (Item 40, 41). This is correct. The qualifications issued to students reflect the species of the plant and the processes of that plant as specified in the Meat Industry Training Package. Any implied criticism arising from the type of species and the associated assessment should be taken up with industry training bodies since we teach to meet the requirements of the industry-endorsed training package.

The AMIEU submission correctly identifies that the offshore training and assessment is undertaken as a commercial project (Item 36 – 38). While the Institute is able to use Victorian government funds to provide training and assessment services to Australian residents in Victoria, clearly these funds are not available for any work undertaken offshore and the Institute therefore charges commercial rates for full cost recovery.

The apparent claim by the AMIEU that holders of a 457 visa should be reassessed onshore is a puzzling one (#3.2). Under the Australian Quality Training Framework there is an obligation for mutual recognition of all training and assessment undertaken by Registered Training Organisations, whether on or off shore. To reassess students previously assessed as competent by the Institute would be a breach of the AQTF.

In summary, the Institute stands by the quality of its training and assessment services provided offshore. We are able to reassure the members of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration that our offshore training has been subject to considerable internal and external scrutiny and found to meet the requirements of both the training package and Australian quality standards. Given that a large number of our offshore students have subsequently been granted temporary visas to work in Australia, the training would also seem to meeting industry demand for workers in Australia meat processing plants.

Yours faithfully



JOE PIPER
Chief Executive

Encl

Cc: Matt McNeice, Manager, Business Development Unit
David Beard, Department Manager, Science and Food Technology



Government of South Australia

Department of Further Education,
Employment, Science and Technology

RECEIVED South West TAFE Director's Office 11 AUG 2006	
Copies	DB, JK, PK
Action	for info
File	Soft-Meat Processing

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Reference Number: 06/9C

Mr Barrie Baker
Director
South West Institute of TAFE
PO Box 674
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Dear Mr Baker

RE: Complaint Investigation

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in resolving the complaint received by Quality Branch regarding services provided by your organisation.

An assessment of the materials submitted has been made and Mr David Beard has given considerable information in support of the written material to my staff. I can now confirm that I am satisfied that the organisation complies with Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) *Standards for Registered Training Organisations* in your delivery and assessment of the Certificate III in Meat Processing (Slaughtering) in China. I consider the complaint to be closed.

I note that your organisation delivers Meat Processing at Certificates II and III level in South Australia. I have determined that a site audit of some South Australian delivery sites will be made before the end of 2006 and I will be seeking the collaboration of the Victorian Dept. of Employment, Training and Tertiary Education in the conduct of this audit. A copy of this letter has been sent to the Manager, VET Provider Registration in that Department.

The materials you sent to this Office will be returned under separate cover as you have requested.

Should you require any additional information regarding this matter, please contact Ms Margaret Cottington, Senior Project Officer on telephone 8226 4239 or email Cottington.margaret@sau.gov.sa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Ann Doolette
Director Quality

July 2006
8 August 2006

MINTRAC

NATIONAL MEAT INDUSTRY TRAINING ADVISORY COUNCIL LIMITED

Paul/
Rod/
Joek

31 January 2006

Mr David Beard
Manager Industrial Science
TAFE South West Institute
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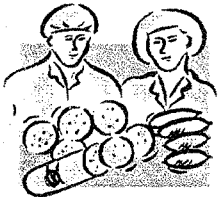


PROCESSING

Dear David

I write in reply to your email of 9th January 2006, in which you requested that MINTRAC prepare an independent report into South West TAFE's overseas delivery process.

The MINTRAC Board met to consider your email on 30 January 2006. The Board appreciated the spirit of your request, and your willingness for openness.



SMALLGOODS

The Board has, however, resolved that MINTRAC should not take an active role in monitoring or auditing the delivery of Australia Meat Industry qualifications overseas.

In reaching this decision, the Board reviewed the charter of MINTRAC which clearly directs the company to provide services to the Australian Meat Industry. To involve MINTRAC in overseas delivery not only takes the company beyond its intended role, but also involves it in a range of competing commercial operations which have the potential to impact on the Australian meat industry in the future. The Board was also concerned that once it entered the area of International training, MINTRAC involvement could be used by some organisations to seek a competitive advantage.

Thank you for your approach to the MINTRAC Board.

Yours sincerely



RETAIL


Jenny Kroonstuiver
Chief Executive Officer