E-Skilling Australians to Fill Australian ICT Skill Shortage:
Future Proofing Australian Workforce to Weather Financial Meltdown

**Submission to the House of Representative
Standing Committee on
Employment and Workplace Relations
Inquiry into regional skills relocation**

Terms of Reference: That the Committee inquire into the applicability of government employment policies to address the skill shortage in regional Australia focusing on opportunities to support the relocation of unemployed workers from areas of high unemployment to areas experiencing skills shortages.

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House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

31st May 2010

Subject: **E-Skilling Australians to Fill Australian ICT Skill Shortage:**
             Future Proofing Australian Workforce to Weather Financial
             Meltdown

Thank you for the opportunity to make a late submission to the Standing
Committee on Employment and Workplace Relations Inquiry into Regional skills
reallocation.

My project initiative grew from reading consecutively two (2) Selection Criteria
e.g. State Library which … equated 2 years Work Experience or Microsoft
Certification Professional (MCP) and Queensland Police …. To rapidly acquire
the knowledge of, then went on to define the 6 components of an MCP.

During a visit to the office of the Member for Stafford in 2008, I drew attention to
inequalities in "Reskilling Opportunities" via the ICT Vendor Certification route:

> For around $10,500, a Microsoft Private Provider, such as Excom
> "Express IT", following a 30-35 day's intensive certification course, they
> will guarantee a ICT job placement.

> Alternatively, Southbank TAFE offered an MCP course for $7,500.

> Following a Reskilling Summit in Lisbon in the year 2000 (Lisbon Year
> 2000 Agreement), the European Union set a target to reskill 20 million of
> EU unemployed citizen by 2010. (Please see attached learningdirect
> Scotland's **"*Request for Proposals for Hub Academies under the***
> ***Alliance for Jobs in Scotland*".)**

More recently, (with the changes to the Queensland Electorate boundaries), the
Member for Nudge has taken the case up with the Queensland Education
Minister.

The proposed project was originally conceived to overcome inequalities in "Reskilling Opportunities" currently available to the unemployed ("Women in IT", Older Unemployed and Older Worker).

Engineering the ICT Reskilling opportunity to satisfy the State Library's selection criteria: "…two years work experience… or MCP.   Whilst employing the Queensland Police's selection criteria " To rapidly acquire the knowledge of …. 6 components' of a MCP…" , to set the reskilling time constraints.

Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe (State member for Stafford), requested a project proposal covering this proposed project. I was only able to complete a proforma project proposal as much of the required data was not available to me.

Catering for Queenslanders who have little to moderate ICT skills, this proposed reskilling projects would be segmented into two parts:

1. Six months work experience (see attached "**Appendix A:Title: Creating A Alternate Entry Into An ICT Career"**) to be integrated with the ICT vendor certification. Please see attached (UK) **"*Barnsley Fastrack to Information Technology (BFIT)*" example.**

2. ICT occupational relevant ICT vendor certification (see attached ***Title: Reskilling Unemployed Queenslanders To Fill The ICT Skill Shortage*),** proposing to customizing existing (relevant) academic units. Delivering equitable access to ICT vendor certification, **(for additional information please** see attached Learningdirect Scotland's **"Request for Proposals for Hub Academies under the Alliance for Jobs in Scotland").**

I would need to undertake this proposed project as a Masters Degree project in order to obtain the relevant data under research conditions (applying tools, technique and methodology). Recently University of Southern Queensland, has accepted my registration to their Master of Computer by research.

John Carven

<div align="center">PROJECT DESCRIPTION</div>

TITLE:

E-Skilling Australians to Fill Australian ICT Skill Shortage:
Future Proofing Australian Workforce to Weather Financial Meltdown

PURPOSE:

To respond to the shortage in ICT skills within Regional Australia by delivering a Just-in-Time, flexible, E-skilling education solution focusing on specific in demand E-skills (ICT skills) which can be quickly gained by unemployed people so that they can become productive and employed.

BACKGROUND:

Arising from experience and realizing that many ICT job descriptions contain a requirement for existing ICT vendor certifications a project was identified to help unemployed people enter or re-enter the workforce with contemporary ICT skills. Vendor certifications such as Microsoft Certification Professional (MCP), Cisco CCNCA and COMPtia are the outcome of specific training and examinations in professional E-skills that are recognized in business and which enable a person to understand, develop, administer and maintain specific computing network environments such as Microsoft server and data centers. These Certifications are like an assurance that the person has reached a level of ability in various technical areas and is able to function as a practitioner.

CURRENT STATUS:

Support for the project exists with:

- Various Government Departments such as Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, has expressed interest in the concept;

- University of Southern Queensland is currently reviewing the proposal to implement the ICT vendor certification to E-skill Queensland / Australian unemployed (implementing worlds best practice would be very similar to current Learningdirect Scotland vendor solution).

CONCEPT OF PROOF:

The proof of concept at this stage is evident by the willingness of USQ to actively participate.

The development of specific range of certification units, integrated with under graduate and post graduate external study would provide a cost effective and affordable method for the unemployed to rapidly gain employability E-skills certification. Then to enroll in the full university IT course to maintain their future employment (Lifelong learning) and to continue their education through further study if they choose.

Practical evidence exists in several areas:

- the fact that vacancies specifying certification are actually being filled (skilled resources are meeting the demand, but unemployed are disadvantaged due to the cost of courses for certification which in the main are between $7,500 and upwards of $12,000);

- Execom, a Microsoft accredited education provider, will give a guarantee an IT job within 4 months. (for upwards of $12,000);

- European Union (EU) as result of the Lisbon (Skill Summit known as the Lisbon 2000 Agreement) implemented its policy to reskill 20 million of EU unemployed citizen by 2010 via ICT vendor certification;

- Learningdirect Scotland was delegated by the Scottish Provencal Government to implement EU policy, to reskill 100,000 Scottish unemployed citizen by 2010;

- ICT Certification is an ongoing, growth area due to the nature of computing e.g. the cyclic upgrade of operating systems and network software tools means that existing skilled resources need to maintain currency in the market. This also opens up opportunity for reskilling the unemployed to meet the demand during `peak' periods when organizations are transitioning, or migrating, their existing network systems to the newer products.