

VET IN SCHOOLS INQUIRY

SUBMISSION TO THE

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

On behalf of

ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities
Industries



ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Qualifications Standards Body of Australia Ltd
(EEQSBA), trading as **EE-Oz Training Standards**

September 2002

EE-Oz Training Standards

ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Qualifications Standards Body (EEQSBA) Ltd trading as, **EE-Oz Training Standards**, is a not-for-profit organisation serving and working in partnership with Australia's ElectroComms & EnergyUtilities industries¹.

EE-Oz Training Standards operates under a charter from the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) as a declared national Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB). A Board of Directors comprised of key Industry representatives' leads it.

It is the peak vocational education and training (VET) advisory body for ElectroComms & EnergyUtilities.

It is engaged in:

- Facilitating national/local industry involvement
- Providing Training and Policy Advice
- Undertaking Research and Analysis
- Providing Strategic Advice and Leadership
- Formulating Qualification Names and Career Paths
- Formulating Competency Standards
- Providing and accessing VET Technical Expertise
- Supporting and working with training organisations

EE-Oz Training Standards promotes and provides advice on training related technical matters, on the industries' vocational education and training needs. It was formerly the NUEITAB, and was established in August 1995.

A key feature of **EE-Oz Training Standards** is its facilitative role of bringing together key industry groups, industry practitioners, regulators, technical experts, and training experts. This ensures collective ownership and currency of VET products and improves industrial relations rapport.

EE-Oz Training Standards has developed National Training Packages, and training and assessment resources for:

- Electrotechnology and Communications,
- Electricity Supply – Generation
- Electricity Supply – Transmission and Distribution
- Gas Supply – Transmission and Distribution

¹ *ElectroComms = Electrotechnology/Communications - electronics, electrical, communications including data and information technology, computer systems, instrumentation, lifts, refrigeration and air conditioning, and renewable energy; and EnergyUtilities = Gas Transmission and Distribution; and Electricity Supply Industry - Transmission/Distribution and Generation*

➤ Lift Industry (in concert with Lift-Skills Australia)

EE-Oz Training Standards welcomes the opportunity to make a contribution to the VET in Schools Inquiry being undertaken by the House of Representatives Education and Training Committee and, submits the following for the consideration of members.

BACKGROUND

In the 1980's the Commonwealth Government embarked upon the strategic reform of the Australian economy including the deregulation of monopolistic preserves and the restructure of vocational education and training from institution led content and standardisation. The establishment of key industry bodies to determine the standards and core content of vocational education and training remains the distinguishing feature of vocational education and training today. Key industry bodies via the Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) have exercised responsibility for the development or provision of advice on competency standards, quality assurance procedures, teachers' qualifications and student assessment and ITAB support is sought for accreditation of courses. Thus, the quality of Australian vocational education and training is being standardised and assured by the relevant industry bodies.

Increasing national concern for youth unemployment has resulted in the development of Commonwealth, State and Territory initiatives to enhance employment and vocational education and training opportunities in secondary schools. The number of apprenticeship and traineeship positions has decreased markedly in the past twenty-five years affording fewer opportunities for Australian youth to access meaningful employment and develop their knowledge and skills. The initiative to incorporate vocational studies within the high school curriculum is seen as one method to combat the lack of opportunity for Australian youth to access skilled employment.

The Electrotechnology Industry initially developed a Discussion Paper on Vocational Education and Training in Secondary Schools to review issues associated with such and, to support the development of an ElectroComms and Energy Utilities industries policy document. The following represents the Industries views and policy with respect to VET in Schools.

EE-Oz Training Standards would be more than happy to supplement this submission in writing or in person as seen fit by the Committee.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the **EE-Oz Training Standards** ElectroComms and Energy Utilities industries Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools Policy is to provide the industry position on this issue to those reviewing and/or implementing VET in Schools to enunciate the relationships between the stated aims of VET in Schools policy with current industrial contexts.

SCOPE

The **EE-Oz Training Standards** ElectroComms and Energy Utilities industries VET in Schools policy is to apply to all sectors of the ElectroComms (Electrotechnology and Communications - electronics, electrical, communications including data and information technology, computer systems, instrumentation, lifts, refrigeration and air conditioning, and renewable energy); and EnergyUtilities (Gas Transmission and Distribution; and Electricity Supply Industry - Transmission/Distribution and Generation) industries.

POLICY FEATURES

State or Territory VET in Schools proposals that are not consistent with this **EE-Oz Training Standards** ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries policy, not be supported:

1. State or Territory VET in Schools proposals must deliver National Training Package outcomes, where Training Packages exist and that the combination of units proposed for the VET in Schools program be appropriate for a long-term career in the ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries.
2. Selection processes are put in place that:
 - i. ensure prospective participants have skills, including applied maths and science consistent with the demands of the proposed program, and
 - ii. ensure representation from the industry/enterprises that are to provide the work experience.
3. Wherever possible, VET in Schools participants enter into contracts of training similar to those entered into by mainstream trainees/apprentices.
4. VET in Schools enrolments are offered in numbers consistent with the absorptive capacity of the industry.
5. The relationship between “*curriculum hours*” and “*workplace experience hours*” is approximately the same for VET in Schools participants as that experienced by the relevant mainstream trainees/apprentices.

CONTENT

1. The key industry bodies via **EE-Oz Training Standards** and its State and Territory ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Network ITABs retain responsibility for the quality standards of competencies, assessment procedures and outcomes for all Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), which provide ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries training including secondary schools.

2. The ITAB (**EE-Oz Training Standards** and/or its respective State/Territory ITAB Network) support be sought for the accreditation of courses and the registration of providers in secondary schools, as for all Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), in order that the quality of Australian vocational education and training be standardised and assured by the relevant industry bodies.
3. The training requirements of the ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries remain the responsibility of the industry via **EE-Oz Training Standards** to assure the safety of life and property.
4. The initiative to incorporate vocational studies within the secondary school curriculum is recognised as a relevant method to combat the lack of opportunity for Australian youth to access skilled employment.
5. That any government policy decisions to incorporate ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries vocational education and training into the secondary school curricula as a recognised part of the higher school certificates be endorsed subject to **EE-Oz Training Standards** endorsement of content and delivery.
6. Teachers of competencies recognised by the ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries are required to be qualified to the **EE-Oz Training Standards** defined industry standard in order to gain recognition of learning outcomes by graduates.
7. Designated secondary school teachers without trade training be recognised as having a role in developing the cognitive development (underpinning theory) relevant to aspects of ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries vocations.
8. A secondary school not be permitted to become a Registered Training Organisation unless able to guarantee on-and off-the-job training to the required industry standard.
9. Quality assurance processes be developed and adopted to ensure that secondary schools deliver the same quality of educational outcome via an industry endorsed recognition process for accreditation and registration.
10. Consideration be given to a range of delivery options including training in school based facilities plus work placement, in registered enterprise workplaces, with registered and accredited vocational education and training providers, utilising summer schools with registered providers, and in registered mobile classrooms.
11. The ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries recommends that Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP) or its successor, allocate funds to industry forums to market vocational education and training in schools involving strategic promotions of trade education, the funding of a mobile classroom, and the strategic targeting of school vocational centres.

12. The industry assumes responsibility for marketing to students, teachers, career advisers and parents the realities of employment in the industry.
13. Legal issues associated with enterprise work placement of secondary school students be resolved.

Queries regarding the ElectroComms and EnergyUtilities Industries VET in Schools policy can be directed to **EE-Oz Training Standards**.

Yours sincerely,



Tony Palladino
Chief Executive Officer

EE-Oz Training Standards

**PO Box Q284,
QVB Post Shop
Sydney NSW 1230**

Phone: (02) 9290 2533

Fax: (02) 9290 2544

Website: www.ee-oz.com.au

e-mail: ee-oz@ee-oz.com.au