

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry Portfolio  
Budget Estimates Hearing 2014-15  
2-3 June 2014

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** Australian Skills Quality Authority

**TOPIC:** Provision of Adequate Training

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard, 2 June 2014, page 58-59)

**QUESTION No.:** BI-30

**Senator RHIANNON:** I want to go to some of the reports you issued last year that were quite useful. I found that one of them revealed shortcomings in safety and welfare training across the country. One specific finding was that three-quarters of the colleges audited failed over training for the construction white card, which is an occupational safety ticket required by workers on all building sites. Do you have the names of any of the colleges that were caught up in that study where you identified that issue?

**Dr Orr:** We did not publish the names of the training organisations in the report.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Was there any reason for that?

**Dr Orr:** We were respecting their privacy. They would have had an opportunity to become compliant as part of that strategic review audit process. I can confirm that we did not publish the names of the providers in that report.

**Senator RHIANNON:** You have said that you respect their privacy but in the description you gave of this problem you said that three-quarters of the colleges audited over training failed in key aspects of occupational health and safety. Do we draw a conclusion from that that there would therefore be a downgrade in job safety for workers and the public if that training is not done properly?

**Dr Orr:** If the action that we took resulted in the application of a suspension of that particular training from the scope of the provider's registration, yes, their name would have been published on our website. I am happy to provide you with a list of the names of those providers that were so published.

**Senator RHIANNON:** You will take that on notice?

**Dr Orr:** I certainly will.

**Senator RHIANNON:** I also note that you found problems with 87 per cent of colleges examined over aged-care training, with about one-third teaching a nominally one-year certificate in 16 weeks or less. Do we conclude from that that people who gained that certificate that was taught in such a short time are providing reduced care for elderly people?

**Dr Orr:** There is no question that poor-quality training and poor-quality outcomes in that training have a detrimental effect on the skills of workers entering those jobs. ASQA does not necessarily chase up and remove those qualifications from individuals. ASQA deals with the quality issues with the provider. We do have powers under the act to cancel qualifications and, in cases where we do believe that the quality is so suspect that the qualification ought to be withdrawn, we request that the provider cancel those qualifications and seek the return of those qualifications to the provider. If they do not do it we have powers under the act to do that ourselves, to cancel those qualifications.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Have you done that?

**Dr Orr:** We have in some instances, yes.

**Senator RHIANNON:** Can you take on notice the providers you have called on to do that and, if they have done it, what the results have been? To go back to your answer, from what I understood, your job is with the people who deliver the training. But it appears that what we have been left with here are people who have received diplomas where their education standards were not what you

may have expected or of a quality that I think has been assumed is necessary within the aged-care sector. Is that a fair assumption?

**Dr Orr:** Yes.

## ANSWER

### Strategic Audits undertaken for the White Card review

ASQA undertook 47 Strategic Audits as part of the *Training for the White Card for Australia's Construction Industry* strategic review.

These audits revealed that:

- More than 30% of providers audited for the review were fully compliant with the Standards for RTOs at the initial audit;
- Once those RTOs that were not compliant at the initial audit were given 20 working days to provide rectification evidence, more than 70% of the 47 RTOs audited were found compliant;

ASQA began regulatory action against the RTOs that remained not compliant and at the time of writing ASQA Commissioners had issued notices of their intention to impose an administrative sanction to four providers as a result of continuing non-compliance (three to suspend and one to amend the scope of registration). Three of the sanctions did not proceed as the providers were able to rectify the non-compliances while one matter is still ongoing. Other regulatory activity is still in train as a result of the review.

None of the 47 providers subject to one of these audits is currently listed on ASQA's public decision website as having been the subject of an adverse regulatory decision. ASQA regulatory decisions are published at: <http://www.asqa.gov.au/about/regulatory-decisions/asqa-decisions.html>

### Cancellation of Qualifications

ASQA has given four providers a written direction under section 56(2)(a)(i) of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* requiring the provider to cancel VET qualifications and/or statements of attainment and to notify the relevant persons.

ASQA has not made any decisions to cancel VET qualifications / statements of attainment itself (NVR s 56(1)).

ASQA does not publish these decisions.