

Order response to
Question No 532-18



Australian Government

**Department of Industry
Tourism and Resources**

THE BUSINESS OF
Eating

FIRST YEAR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT



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Eating

FIRST YEAR IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

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The Hon Ian Macfarlane, MP
Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

The Hon Warren Entsch MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the
Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister and Parliamentary Secretary

In my capacity of Chair of the Implementation Group, I am most pleased to submit to you the attached report outlining progress on the first year implementation of the Restaurant and Catering Industry Action Agenda.

Implementation of the Action Agenda commenced in January 2004. The Implementation Group has dedicated itself to driving forward those recommendations developed following extensive consultation with industry and government. Those recommendations were articulated in *The Business of Eating Out – An Action Agenda for Australia's Restaurant and Catering Industry*, which was formally launched in Melbourne on 28 March 2004.

I would like to acknowledge the substantial amount of work undertaken by members of the Implementation Group over the past twelve months.

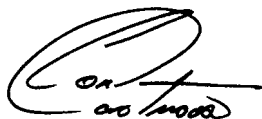
Restaurant & Catering Australia has continued to champion many aspects of the Action Agenda. Though challenges remain, progress is being made on education and training issues through several channels, including the new Service Industries Skills Council.

The work of the Marketing and Promotion Taskforce has seen increased collaboration between the food, wine and tourism sectors. The consumer segmentation study of the Australian dining out market has been completed and the initial stages of the development of a generic marketing campaign have commenced.

The Government's commitment to further promoting the uptake of Australian Workplace Agreements will mean another significant area of the Action Agenda, industrial relations, can be better addressed.

There are of course many other recommendations that the Implementation Group has been working on, and expects to complete over the following year. I look forward to the opportunity to present the second report on the implementation of the Restaurant and Catering Industry Action Agenda in 2006.

Yours sincerely



Con Castrisos
Implementation Group Chair

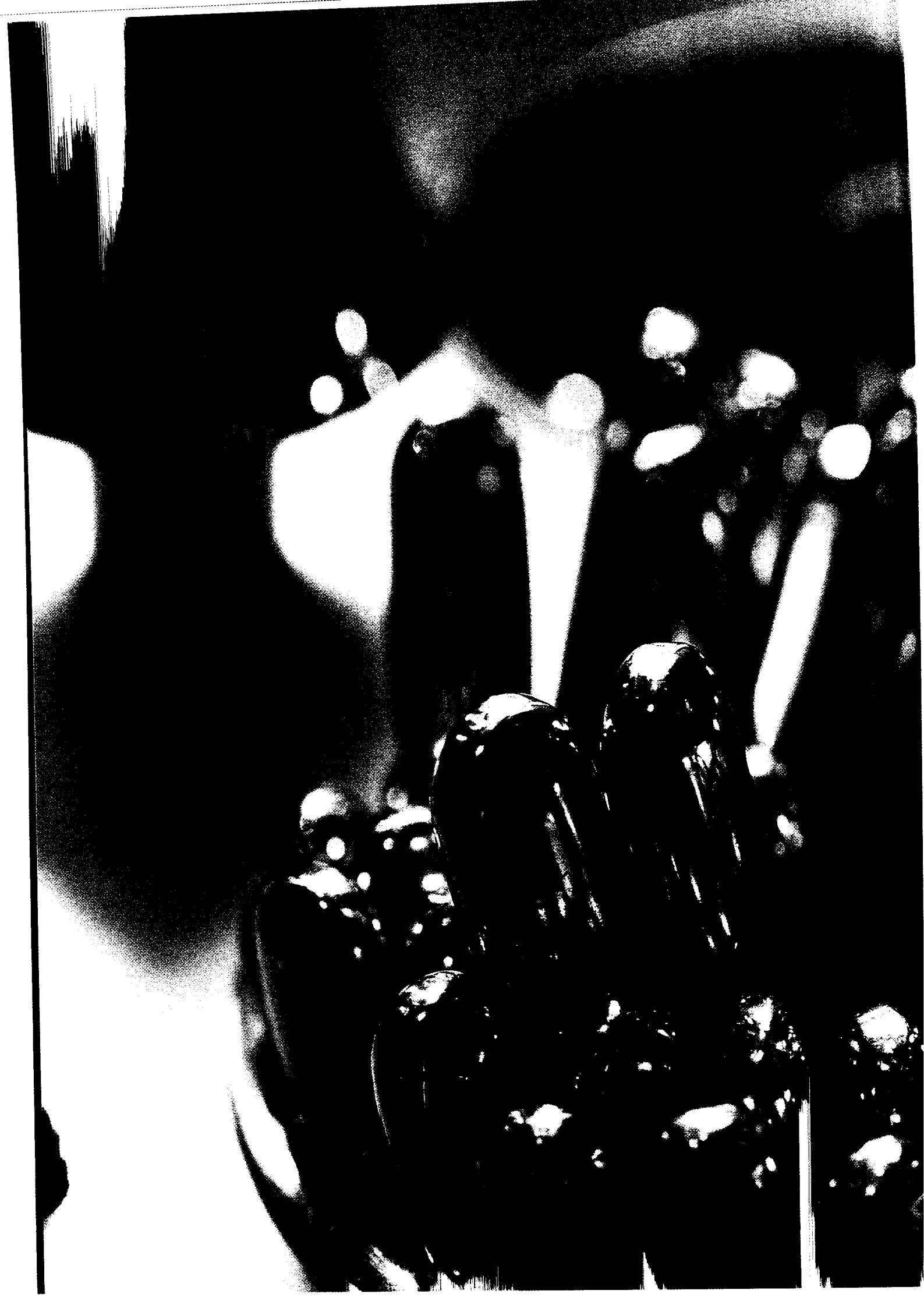
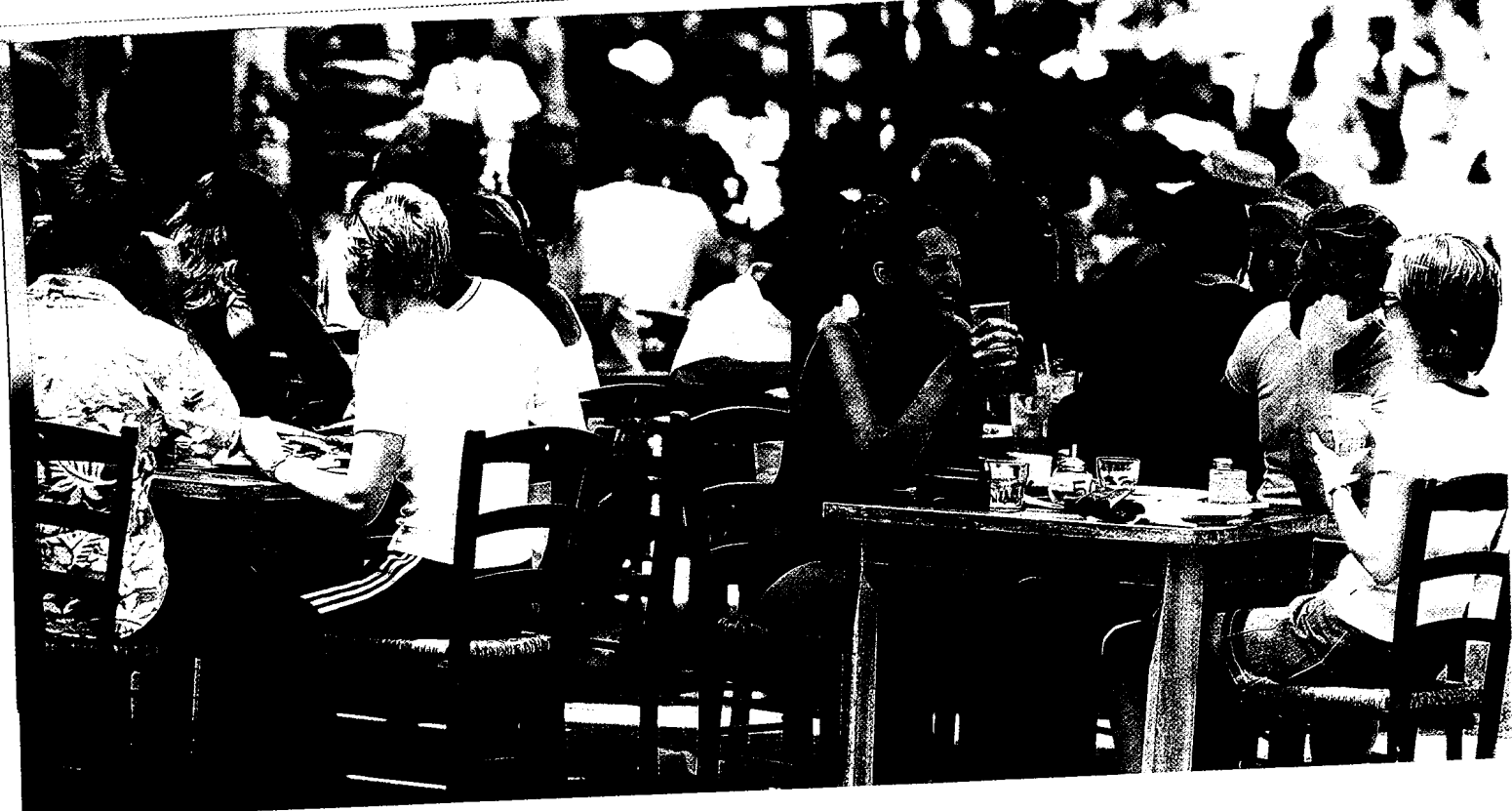


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The Industry Vision

To be recognised as an industry of excellence, achieved through its commitment to professionalism, profitability and sustainability within its broader social and economic contribution.

Implementation of the Restaurant and Catering Industry Action Agenda

In January 2004, an Implementation Group for the Restaurant and Catering Industry Action Agenda (the Action Agenda) was established, with quarterly meetings being held over the ensuing twelve months. The Implementation Group is comprised of a number of members of the Strategic Industry Leaders Group (SILG), who were involved in the development of the Action Agenda, together with other representative individuals. This provides a strong cross-section of industry with appropriate commitment, expertise and representation to enable the Action Agenda to move forward.

Sub-committees formed to progress specific Action Agenda issues are outlined on page 3. The sub-committees assist and report to the Implementation Group.

MEMBERS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

CON CASTRISOS

President, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Chair, Implementation Group
Proprietor, Café San Marco

PETER CROWE

Director, Fee and Me

PETER DOYLE OAM

Proprietor, Doyle's on the Beach

MICHAEL FISCHER

Proprietor, Barnaby's Waterfront Restaurants

JOHN HART

Chief Executive Officer, Restaurant & Catering Australia

KARON HEPNER

Human Resource Manager, Compass Group

KATE LAMONT

Proprietor, Lamont's Restaurants and Winery

KRISTIAN LIVOLSI

General Manager, The Observatory

SEAN NEWTON

Southern Retail Manager, McDonalds Australia Ltd

STEVE SIMON

Proprietor, La Pizzaiola

SARAH CLOUGH

General Manager, Industry Sustainability Group,
Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2004

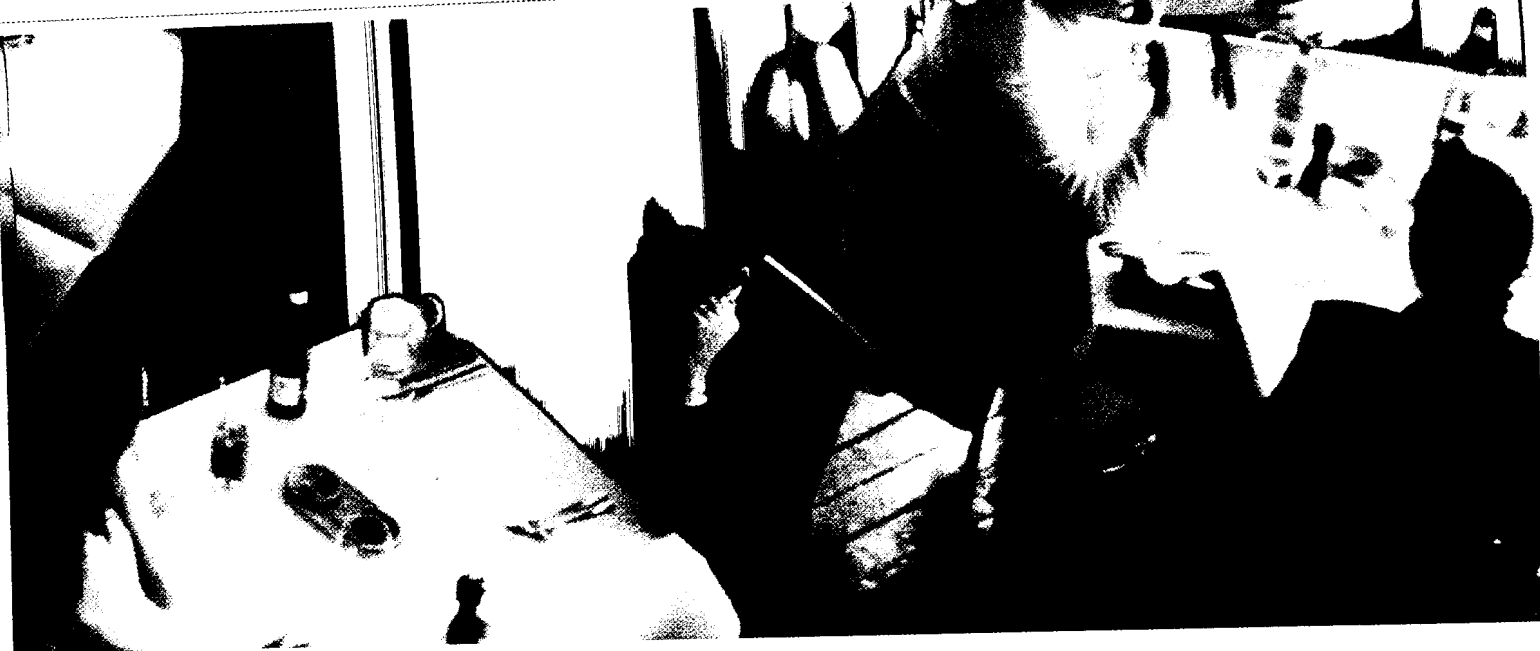
Significant progress has already been made on the implementation of the Restaurant and Catering Industry Action Agenda. Specifically, four key outcomes achieved during 2004 as a direct result of the Action Agenda are:

Marketing and Promotion Taskforce established and consumer segmentation study undertaken

A Marketing and Promotion Taskforce was established in January 2004 to specifically further the associated Action Agenda recommendations. A consumer segmentation study into the Australian dining out market, commissioned by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources on behalf of the Taskforce, has been completed. Findings of the study are being used by the industry to develop a generic marketing campaign.

Research conducted into the training and skills development requirements of supervisors and managers

Research was conducted by Restaurant and Catering Australia (R&CA), with Australian Government funding assistance through the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), into the training and skills development requirements for supervisors and managers.



Key findings were based on surveys and focus groups conducted with restaurateurs and hoteliers, which indicated that many in the industry still find it extremely difficult to recruit staff. The study also revealed that the biggest reason for staff attrition is the excessive amount of hours worked by staff in the industry, followed by conditions and wages in the industry. Industry is preparing a report based on these findings to the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), and will make recommendations to address staffing issues.

Feasibility exercise for Industry Accreditation Program undertaken

A feasibility exercise, undertaken by R&CA with Australian Government funding through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, identified restaurateurs' preferred model for a voluntary restaurant accreditation program. A survey conducted by industry established the amount of time and money restaurateurs are willing to spend to become accredited, the various criteria on which an accreditation program should focus, and the benefits anticipated by operators. A report outlining key findings and recommendations of the study has been developed to assist further development of R&CA's restaurant accreditation model.

Technology Roadmapping Exercise completed

The technology road mapping exercise, completed in April 2004, identified the industry's future product and service requirements and provided an evaluation of technologies required to meet these needs. The R&CA Supply Chain Committee will use the technology roadmap to assist the uptake of technology and innovation in the industry. R&CA is also working on a technology diffusion project aimed at providing concise, targeted information to industry through R&CA's website.

The summary of progress made against each recommendation is outlined in pages 5–53.



BACKGROUND

At the end of 2002, at the request of Restaurant & Catering Australia, the Australian Government announced its intention to work with industry to develop the Action Agenda, which covers restaurant and catering businesses that trade in predominately sit-down and catered meals and drinks. The SILG made a substantial contribution to the scope and definition of the Action Agenda and, with other Action Agenda working groups, articulated a five-point goal for the industry.

The Action Agenda seeks to build an industry that:

- is sustainable and has mutually productive links with industry partners;
- is more skilled and professional, with a good supply of quality staff and more skilled business managers;
- works within a more flexible workplace relations environment, that better reflects the nature of the industry;
- is made more cohesive, adaptable and sustainable, through skilled and informed marketing and promotion; and
- is comfortable with technology and innovation as ways of increasing efficiency and competitiveness.

ACTION AGENDA RECOMMENDATIONS

The SILG and other Action Agenda working groups developed 31 recommendations to form a pathway through which the industry can work towards its vision and five-point goal. The recommendations are presented under the following major headings:

- better business;
- education, employment and training;
- workplace relations;
- marketing and promotion; and
- technology and innovation.

A copy of the Action Agenda, *The Business of Eating Out – An Action Agenda for Australia's Restaurant and Catering Industry*, which details the 31 recommendations, can be accessed through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources' website at www.industry.gov.au.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Implementation of over 95 per cent of the Action Agenda recommendations has commenced.

To date, two recommendations have been completed successfully. These are:

1. Recommendation 25

Initiate industry-specific market research, including needs-based consumer segmentation, from which the industry, especially regional businesses, can strategically plan.

2. Recommendation 28

Identify future product, service and other needs for the industry, then evaluate technologies to meet these.

In addition, outcomes achieved during 2004 contributing to the remaining recommendations include:

- Establishment of the Marketing and Promotion Taskforce;
- Consumer segmentation study into the Australian dining out market;

- Increased collaboration of the food, wine and tourism sectors;
- Increased awareness and progress on training and education issues;
- Increased profile of the restaurant and catering industry and its peak body;
- Business skills development projects developed; and
- Establishment of the R&CA Supply Chain Committee.

Implementation is overseen by the Implementation Group and guided by the strategies developed by the SILG. In addition to working closely with those Government Departments identified in the Action Agenda, the Implementation Group has drawn on the expertise of other individuals and organisations to progress the various recommendations.

FUTURE DIRECTION — THE YEAR AHEAD

The second year of implementation will focus primarily on completing the recommendations. In 2005, priority will be given to increasing business skills, the uptake of Australian Workplace Agreements and the generic marketing campaign.

The Implementation Group aims to ensure that all recommendations are commenced by March 2006, however, it is acknowledged that some activities will have an ongoing status.

The Implementation Group will continue to work with R&CA to access government programs to fund activities aimed at progressing the Action Agenda recommendations. A transition plan outlining the final steps and a way forward for the industry will be developed and included in next year's report, which is due in early 2006.



LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACCI	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ATDP	Australian Tourism Development Program
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DIMIA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
DoTARS	Department of Transport and Regional Services
NFIS Ltd	National Food Industry Strategy Ltd
NSSS	National Skills Shortages Strategy
OEA	Office of the Employment Advocate
OH&S	Occupational Health and Safety
R&CA	Restaurant & Catering Australia
SILG	Strategic Industry Leaders Group
VET	Vocational Education and Training



RELATED COMMITTEES (as of May 2005)

The following three sub-committees have been formed to assist the Implementation Group to progress Action Agenda issues.

Marketing and Promotion Taskforce

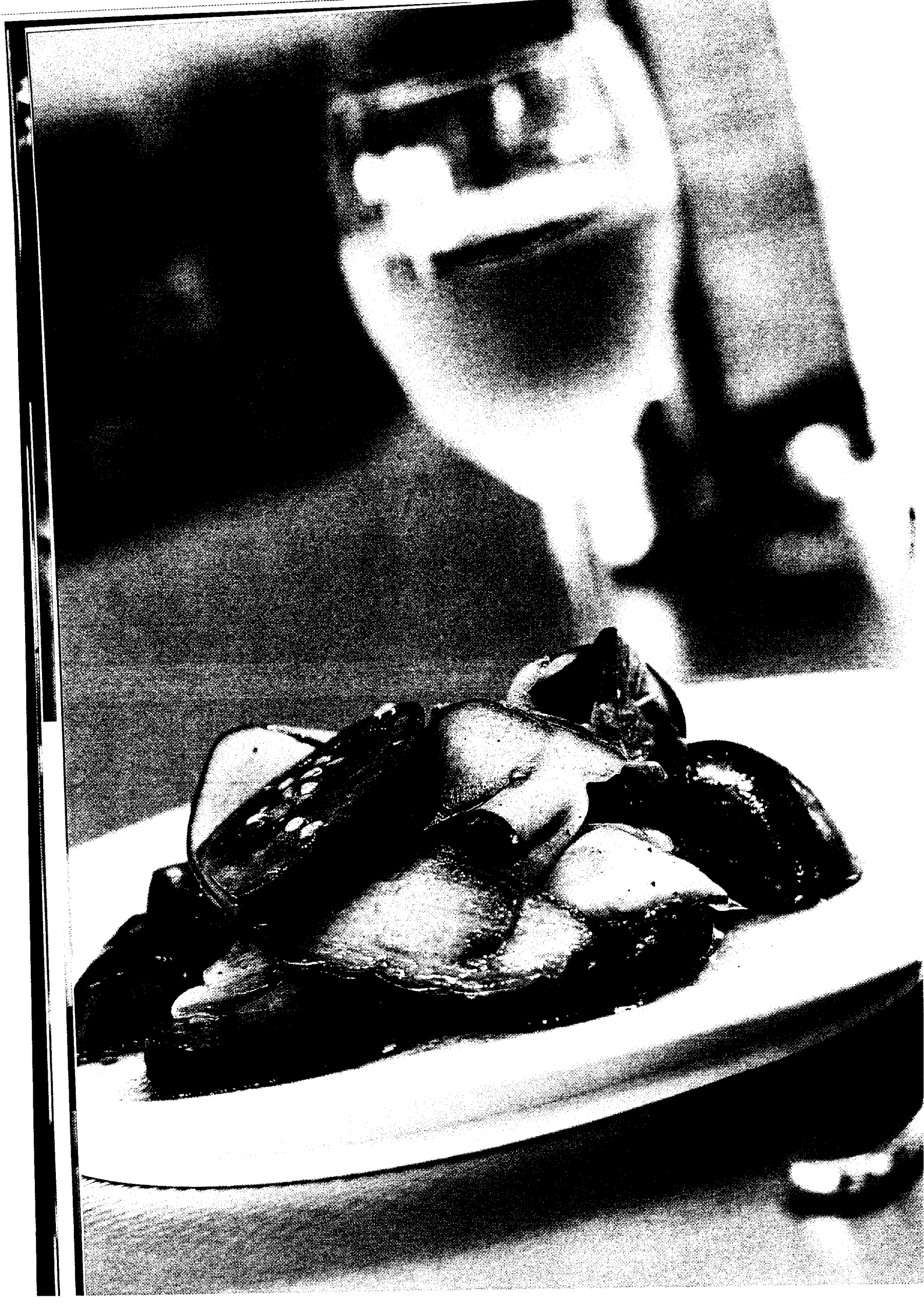
Kate Lamont	Taskforce Chair; Proprietor, Lamont's Restaurants and Winery
Alla Wolfe-Tasker	Deputy Taskforce Chair; Proprietor, Lake House Victoria; Tourism Victoria Board member
John Hart	Chief Executive Officer, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Simon Holloway	National Business Director, Lion Nathan Australia
Trudi Jenkins	Editor, Delicious Magazine
Jessica Keen	Project Manager, Niche Marketing, Tourism Australia
Sylvia McCoy	Chairperson, Australasian Food Wine Tourism Network; Australian Farmers Market Association
Matt Moran	Proprietor, Aria Restaurant
Christina Murphy	Industry Policy Adviser, Austrade Government Industry Policy Group
Andrew McEvoy	Director, Australasia, Tourism Australia
Sandra Willett	International Media Manager, Tourism Australia

Workplace Relations Sub-Committee

Karon Hepner	Sub-committee Chair / Human Resource Manager, Compass Group
Peter Crowe	Director, Fee and Me
John Hart	Chief Executive Officer, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Wendy Jones	Chief Executive Officer, Restaurant & Catering Victoria

R&CA Supply Chain Committee

Kristian Livolsi	Committee Chair; General Manager, The Observatory
Graham Bolton	Proprietor, Sails Seafood Restaurant
John Hart	Chief Executive Officer, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Simon Holloway	National Business Director, Lion Nathan Australia
Andrew O'Brien	Former General Manager, Fine Wine, Southcorp Wines
Steven Richmond	Director, Purchase Point Technology
Arnie Selvarajah	Chief Executive Officer, Foodservice Associates
Linda Stuckey	Head of Client Management, Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific, American Express
Allan Watts	National Manager, Habottle on Premise



RECOMMENDATION 1: STRONG AND REPRESENTATIVE INDUSTRY BODY

KEY AREA

BETTER BUSINESS

AIMS

- An industry that is more sustainable and has mutually productive links with its partners.
- A regulatory framework that reflects a good balance between industry needs and responsibilities.
- A superannuation system that balances the interests of all parties.
- An industry that makes use of government support programs.
- Clear and widely-recognised measures of the industry's health.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Support development of a strong and representative industry body that can speak effectively on national issues.

Responsibility: Industry / Australian Government Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to be implemented for this recommendation are short term¹.

Restaurant & Catering Australia, representing the national interests of Australian restaurateurs and caterers, has continued to play a major role in the implementation of the Action Agenda. It has representation on key industry committees, including the Tourism White Paper's Industry Implementation Advisory Group, Service Industries Skills Council administered by the Australian National Training Authority (which will revert to the Department of Education, Science and Training in July 2005), and the Tourism Industry Advisory Committee.

Throughout 2004, R&CA also represented the restaurant and catering industry's interests

through participation on the National Tourism Accreditation Working Group and the Small Business Forum.

Future actions:

R&CA is committed to its major role in the implementation of the Action Agenda, and will conduct the following activities to ensure swift completion of this recommendation:

- assist State and Territory Restaurant & Catering Associations with marketing and promotion to increase their membership;
- seek representation on key bodies at the national level; and
- apply for available grants and funding.

1. Short term strategies are aimed to be commenced within six months of the commencement of the Action Agenda, from March 2004.



RECOMMENDATION 2:
Encourage all restaurant operators to reach an adequate level of business skills.

Responsibility

Industry / Australian Government

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to be implemented for this recommendation are short term.

R&CA received seed funding of \$10,000 from the Australian Government, administered by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, to test the feasibility of a Restaurant Accreditation Program. R&CA engaged a consultant toward the end of 2004 to undertake a survey of industry business operators, seeking their views on accreditation schemes. Key findings indicate industry supports the idea of an accreditation scheme that is recognised by consumers. This assessment of feasibility was completed in early 2005 and is consistent with the national direction on broader industry accreditation.

R&CA's proposed accreditation scheme incorporates an auditing system used for the R&CA Awards for Excellence Program. R&CA

received funding of \$150,000 for the 2004 awards through the Australian Government's See Australia program.

Future actions

R&CA will continue to finalise its accreditation business plan and liaise with industry and government to ensure the framework is consistent with industry needs and any national direction.

Plans are also underway to undertake basic business skills training for existing restaurant operators who have not obtained these skills prior to entry into the industry. This would involve industry developing and delivering an education and training course for restaurant and catering business operators, including a mentoring program for small business operators. Funding for this mentoring program was received by R&CA through the Australian Government's Small Business Enterprise Culture Program. The mentoring program is designed to up-skill restaurateurs in operating businesses, and aligns with the core criteria for the proposed accreditation certification, as outlined in the Restaurant Accreditation Program, which is available at www.restaurantcater.asn.au.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Minimise wastage from the superannuation system and promote building of retirement savings.

Responsibility: Australian Government through the Department of the Treasury

Progress to date: Commenced and ongoing priority for 2005-06

Strategies to be implemented for this recommendation are short term.

Australian Government changes to the superannuation reporting requirements during 2004 were welcomed by industry. The Implementation Group, however, continues to encourage the Government to raise the superannuation guarantee contribution threshold.

Future actions

The Implementation Group will continue to seek changes to the superannuation threshold in consultation with Government over the next 18 months.

RECOMMENDATION 4. Identify opportunities to reduce the regulatory burden on the industry

Responsibility: Industry / Australian Government, including through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) – in consultation with the National Food Industry Strategy Ltd (NFIS Ltd) – and the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA)

Progress to date: Commenced and Ongoing

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term².

R&CA has held discussions with DoHA on matters relating to the regulation of food safety. Forums convened by the Office of Small Business have been held with industry and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI). R&CA has joined the steering committee for a Food Standards Australia New Zealand project to address issues associated with the implementation of Food Safety Programs.

R&CA met with DAFF, the Centre for Food Safety and DoHA to discuss reducing compliance costs through resources created by the Centre for Safety and DoHA. OzFood Net data is now provided via R&CA's website in order to better inform industry about food-borne illnesses (available at www.restaurantcater.asn.au).

The Office of Small Business, in consultation with industry, has developed case studies of regulation in the tourism and hospitality industries to inform policy development. In 2004, the Australian Government launched a raft of small business initiatives under its *Committed to Small Business* policy statement, which included the above-mentioned simplification of the Superannuation Guarantee reporting rules.

Future actions

R&CA and the Implementation Group will continue to work with key Government agencies and industry to reduce the regulatory burden on the industry.

² Medium term strategies are aimed to be commenced within twelve months from the commencement of the Action Agenda, from March 2004.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Develop clear and accurate measures of the state of the industry.

Responsible Party: Industry / Australian Bureau of Statistics / Australian Government (the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources)

Progress to Date: Commenced with further action in 2005

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

R&CA met with Chartered Practising Accountants on several occasions throughout 2004 to develop a chart of accounts and accounting conventions for the industry. R&CA has also purchased the *CCH Restaurant Benchmarking Report and Chart of Accounts for the Restaurant and Catering Industry* to provide guidance in the development of user-friendly statistics for the industry.

In addition, industry members worked with the Australian Bureau of Statistics throughout 2004 to develop user-friendly ratios to measure industry health. As a result, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has agreed to collect various income and expense items in the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Café and Restaurant Survey* in 2004-05. Survey respondents will be asked to report on various activity items that will enable the calculation of indicators including *Industry Value Added* and *Operating Profit Margin*. R&CA has also arranged for collection of data relating to total available seating in both restaurants and catering venues. These data are expected to be available in July 2005.

Responsible Party:

R&CA will continue working with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to develop a methodology for gathering data that are relevant, timely and meaningful to the restaurant and catering industry.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Encourage more efficient supply chain management.

Responsible Party: R&CA Supply Chain

Committee in consultation with NFIS Ltd / Industry / Australian Government (the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources)

Progress to Date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short term.

The R&CA Supply Chain Committee was established following a report on the supply chain produced by R&CA in 2003. This report suggested two areas where the supply chain could be more efficiently managed, namely the management of debt risk and the implementation of more efficient outsourced, cross supplier, transport arrangements. The R&CA Supply Chain Committee was tasked with examining ways to improve supply chain management, which will result in a more efficient industry.

The R&CA Supply Chain Committee, in conjunction with NFIS Ltd, is now working towards developing materials to foster skills enhancement through the accreditation and procurement processes, in addition to improving the availability of technical solutions for operators. This latter goal is being furthered through the technology diffusion project, which is addressed in further detail at Recommendation 29.

Future options

R&CA will investigate incorporating general profitability principles into the education program for accreditation. R&CA will further technology diffusion in the industry, in particular, by establishing an on-line portal through which information on on-line purchasing will be available.

RECOMMENDATION 7 Encourage use of existing government programs by restaurateurs and caterers.

Responsibility: Industry / Australian Government in consultation with NFIS Ltd

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short term.

The Implementation Group has been working closely with DAFF and the NFIS Ltd to explore ways to increase inclusion of food service in existing Australian Government programs. The Implementation Group has written to NFIS Ltd seeking greater cooperation between NFIS Ltd's strategies and the restaurant and catering industry.

Future options

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources will arrange a meeting between the Implementation Group, the Office of Small Business and AusIndustry to discuss program designs for small business within the industry. The discussions will address the industry's perceptions of disadvantage in applying for the Office of Small Business or AusIndustry administered programs.

An Action Plan will be prepared by industry to address these perceptions. Industry will report on this Action Plan in the 2006 Implementation Report.



RECOMMENDATION 8 Develop and disseminate case studies of good business practice.

Applicable to: Industry

Implementation: Near completed with cases to be updated on an ongoing basis

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short term.

Case studies of various businesses demonstrating good business practice have been developed throughout 2004 and incorporated in a Wine Tourism CD-ROM/website. A viability calculator is also being developed to provide advice on establishing wineries. This will also be included on the CD-ROM and the website.

Future actions

R&CA will continue developing additional case studies in varied areas of the industry, with a view to distributing via the CD-ROM, and the website.

RECOMMENDATION 9 Identify opportunities to improve eco-efficiency in the industry.

Applicable to: Industry

Implementation: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

R&CA has been working with key organisations, including Green Globe, the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism, building associations, and government agencies, to keep abreast of developments in environmental management.

Eco-efficiency workshops were trialled by DAFF in mid-2004. R&CA is now seeking DAFF's support for development and dissemination of eco-efficiency information tailored to the restaurant and catering industry. DAFF are currently considering this request.

Future actions

R&CA will continue to liaise with relevant organisations regarding eco-efficiency issues and will seek to disseminate relevant information to industry in order to improve uptake. A more detailed analysis of eco-efficiency in the industry will be provided in 2006

KEY AREA

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

AIMS

- A more skilled and professional industry.
- The industry is more widely seen as a sound long-term career choice.
- Effective use of and ongoing improvement in the national Vocational Education and Training (VET) system.
- Greater understanding of the importance of the cultural traditions of food and dining.

RECOMMENDATION 10:

Maintain and improve the quality of vocational education and training for the restaurant and catering industry, including chefs and cooks, front-of-house staff, and supervisors and managers.

Responsibility: Industry / Service Industries Skills Council / Australian National Training Authority / Australian Government (Department of Education, Science and Training), including engagement with state and territory governments.

Progress to date: Commenced and ongoing

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are ongoing.

Restaurant & Catering Australia (R&CA) and Implementation Group members are represented on the Service Industries Skills Council, the Tourism Industry Advisory Group and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) Education and Training Sub-Committee. Representation on the Service

Industries Skills Council by R&CA increases the influence of the restaurant and catering industry on the quality of vocational education and training in the industry.

In 2004, R&CA received a grant for \$15,000 from ANTA through the Reframing the Future professional development and change management program in which they developed case studies of instances where training providers work effectively with industry. The project also resulted in linkages that have previously not existed between restaurants and caterers and training providers.

Future actions

R&CA and Implementation Group members will continue with representation on relevant boards and groups to ensure that the quality of industry education and training is improved.

Case studies will be promoted to industry when finalised in 2005.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Improve the skills of existing workers in restaurant businesses, including supervisors and managers.

Responsible: Industry / Service Industries Skills Council / Australian Government (Department of Education, Science and Training)

Proposed start: Commenced with detailed action this coming year

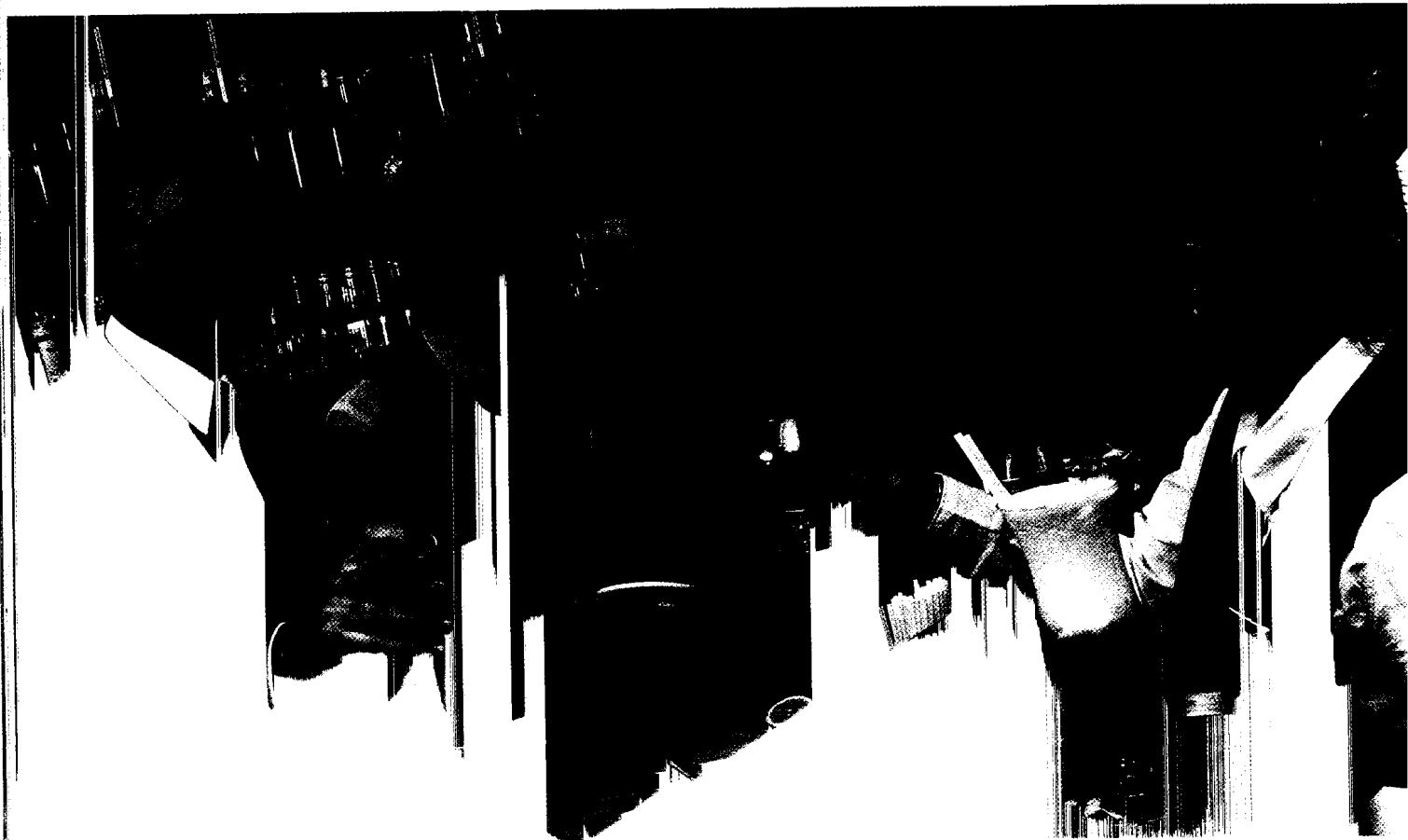
Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

The National Skills Shortages Strategy (NSSS) was announced during 2004 by the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, Minister for Education, Science and Training. The NSSS aims to build on existing initiatives to provide a more comprehensive approach to addressing skills need and includes a project specifically devoted to the food and hospitality industries. This project is being progressed through

ACCI. Specifically, R&CA received Australian Government funding through DEST, via ACCI, to undertake research into the training and skills development requirements of front-of-house staff, supervisors and managers. Part of this research involved a survey of restaurants and hotels regarding areas of their business in which they are having difficulty employing people.

The study indicated that the restaurant and catering industry is failing to compete with other industries to attract staff, primarily due to lifestyle characteristics (such as working hours). A report which outlines survey findings is currently being developed and will include recommendations for implementation by stakeholders.

In addition, the Institute of Trade Skills Excellence and Technical Colleges initiatives, announced during the 2004 federal election campaign, should have a positive impact on the quality of Vocational Education and Training (VET). These initiatives also have the potential to reduce student attrition numbers.



Finally, using funding received through the Australian Government's *Small Business Enterprise Culture Program*, R&CA has contracted a consultant to draft modules for distance education products and marketing. A mentoring approach to up-skill existing workers is being trialled through the *Health Check Program* in Queensland.

IMPLEMENTATION

The R&CA and the Implementation Group will consider the recommendations of the soon to be released NSSS report in addressing how to overcome issues of staff shortages throughout the industry. The group will also monitor development and progress on the implementation of the Technical Colleges Institute for Trade Skills Excellence.

It is hoped specific actions to address skill shortages in the industry can be commenced in the coming year.

RECOMMENDATION 12 Reduce high attrition of students, especially in school-delivered VET.

Implemented by Industry, working with state and territory governments / Structured Workplace Learning Clusters

Progress to date Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

Implementation Group member Mr Michael Fischer is Chair of a Service Industries Skills Council Industry Advisory Committee considering VET issues in schools. The Committee has been investigating the suitability of facilities, equipment and qualifications of teachers at those institutions that provide education and training to the industry. It has

considered, amongst other issues, the R&CA proposal for the streamed offering of hospitality VET in schools. An assessment of aptitude would be conducted to screen students before commencing study toward a qualification.

As noted in Recommendation 11, the Institute of Trade Skills Excellence and Technical Colleges proposals that were announced during the election campaign will help address attrition issues. The Government's anti-poaching initiative announced in the election campaign involves employers receiving a completion payment if they have paid the majority of an apprentice's wages during their training.

In addition, a pilot of the attitudinal assessment tool/screening process was undertaken in Queensland in 2004 by industry, with support from the *Employment Innovation Program*, administered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR). Research is also being undertaken by the Service Industries Skills Council Sub Committee on the aptitude profile of students undertaking hospitality VET programs in schools.

IMPLEMENTATION

Continue to work on addressing skills issues for the restaurant sector, including through the Service Industries Skills Council.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Develop, disseminate and support quality careers information on the restaurant and catering industry.

Responsibility: Industry / Service Industries Skills Council / Australian Government (DEWR and DEST) including through engagement with state and territory governments.

Progress to date: Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

R&CA has received approval through the NSSS Food and Hospitality Project to develop up-to-date resources on careers in the industry to be disseminated to schools and Job Network Agencies. In addition, R&CA is producing a CD-ROM with a link to a stand alone website on training and careers options in the industry.

Future actions:

R&CA will continue to develop a CD-ROM and work to ensure the distribution of up-to-date careers resource material. R&CA and other industry groups are considering the implementation of a staffed telephone facility to provide information to assist people to enter the industry.

The second implementation report, due in early 2006, will provide information on the uptake of these initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION 14: Work with governments to encourage resource allocations that better match industry needs.

Responsibility: Industry through engagement with state and territory governments, the Australian National Training Authority and DEST / Service Industries Skills Council.

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

Implementation Group member Mr Michael Fischer has been appointed to the Service Industries Skills Council and the Tourism Industry Advisory Committee to progress this recommendation.

As stated previously, R&CA received an Australian Government grant from DEST, via ACCI under the NSSS to address training and skills development. Through research gathered and generated as part of the NSSS project, R&CA will have additional data resulting from the project to support this recommendation. Data for the report was drawn from over 300 surveys and from focus groups held in Sydney, Hobart and the Gold Coast.

The Implementation Group are also supportive of the Government's anti-poaching initiative announced in the election (as outlined in Recommendation 12) and are confident this will help to reduce the level of poaching of industry staff that is currently undertaken.

Future actions:

The Implementation Group will continue to work within the Australian Government's NSSS initiative, which has been extended for the



hospitality industry to determine the exact nature of the industry's skills shortages.

The information and statistics derived from the NSSS food and hospitality project will be available for inclusion in the 2006 implementation report.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Update competency standards.

Responsibility: Industry, working through engagement with state and territory governments / Service Industries Skills Council / Australian National Training Authority.

Project to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

R&CA has submitted to the Service Industries Skills Council that the review of relevant competencies takes into consideration

the changing skills required in areas of environmental sustainability, innovation and technology, business and skills/ entrepreneurship. These aspects will be considered as part of the 2005 Review of the Hospitality Training Package to be undertaken by the Service Industries Skills Council.

The Service Industries Skills Council has also agreed to conduct research into entrepreneurship, including the definition of entrepreneurship and the skills involved.

Future actions:

R&CA will continue to collaborate with the Service Industries Skills Council throughout its review of the competency standards to ensure good outcomes for the industry.

The results of the review will be included in the 2006 implementation report.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Support, and leverage off, existing employment, education and training programs.

Responsible: Industry / Australian Government (DEST, through engagement with state and territory governments and DEWR)

Implementation: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are being implemented in the medium term.

A project is being developed by R&CA and DEWR to recognise the prior learning and experience of 60 mature age job seekers in the restaurant and catering industry and provide them with training to enable them to upgrade their skills.

Restaurant & Catering Queensland has also used funding from the Australian Government's Employment Innovations Fund to undertake a pilot study attempting to develop closer links between the industry and employment service providers.

In addition, R&CA continues to support the existing employment, education and training programs through their involvement with ACCI's Employment and Education Sub Committee.

The Technical Colleges initiative, announced by the Australian Government during the 2004 election, has met with a positive response from Australian industry. The relevant hospitality college will make training in cooking available through most of the proposed institute sites.

Finally, DEWR has been working closely with Restaurant & Catering New South Wales on a number of education and training initiatives arising from the work of the Industry

Strategies Taskforce. The initiatives target the accommodation, café and restaurant sector as industries with the greatest potential to connect employment service providers and employers facing skill and labour shortages.

The R&CA, with funding from the Australian Government's Employment Innovations Fund and the funds provided by Job Network Members through the Job Seeker Account ran a training restaurant, Fish on Friday, for three months in Sydney to train job seekers in front and back of house skills. Almost 100 job seekers were provided with 10 days of skills training followed by two days work experience in a RCA member's establishment, followed by a further two days work in the training restaurant.

The concept has proved successful with a similar initiative being undertaken by Restaurant & Catering Australia with a Job Network Member in Wagga Wagga. Discussions are currently underway to undertake the same training in Broken Hill, Albury, Dubbo, Wollongong and Newcastle.

Implementation:

The Implementation Group will continue to work with employment, education and training agencies to support and leverage off existing programs.

Job growth numbers in the industry over the life of the Action Agenda will be reported on in the 2006 implementation report.



RECOMMENDATION 17: Improve industry understanding and utilisation of immigration schemes to help satisfy skills shortages.

Responsibility: Industry / Australian Government (Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) and DEWR)

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short term.

R&CA has committed to work with DIMIA in pursuit of greater industry-government cooperation, particularly in furthering the issue of migration and working visa application processes. The aim being to increase the Australian intake of appropriately skilled staff, where there are shortages in domestic supply.

R&CA has also offered feedback to DIMIA regarding concerns with the level of support and legal requirements related to providing information to members.

R&CA is currently conducting occupational research for trade occupations, including chefs and trade-qualified cooks, as part of NSSS. This research includes consultations with employers and education providers on the skill sets required.

The work being undertaken with NSSS may assist in better identifying skills shortages and quantifying the required level of skilled migration. It is recommended that research obtained through this project is used to inform DIMIA and DEWR on the relevance of Migration Occupations in Demand List and Labour Agreement terms.

The Australian Government, represented by DEWR and DIMIA, have provided R&CA, in November 2004, with a draft Labour Agreement to facilitate the temporary and permanent entry to Australia of trade-qualified chefs and cooks. R&CA is working with DEWR and DIMIA to finalise the agreement.

Future actions

R&CA will liaise with DIMIA regarding requirements for dissemination of immigration-related information to R&CA members.

A summary analysis of the effect of these initiatives on industry appropriate skilled migration will be detailed in the 2006 implementation report.



KEY AREA

WORKPLACE RELATIONS

AIMS

- Encourage greater use of workplace agreements throughout the industry.
- More flexibility in workplace relations arrangements, to better reflect the inherent nature of the restaurant and catering industry, while recognising the need for a genuine safety net.
- Minimise the impact of unfair dismissal laws on restaurant and catering businesses.
- Strive for national consistency in workers' compensation and workplace health and safety laws.
- Prepare, plan and effectively participate in the broader employment debate.

RECOMMENDATION 18:

Promote and adequately resource individual and collective agreement making across the whole industry.

Responsible: Industry / Australian Government (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and Office of the Employment Advocate (OEA))

Progress to Date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

On 1 March 2005, R&CA and Restaurant & Catering Associations in Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland commenced a joint project with the Office of the Employment Advocate (OEA) to increase the take-up of Australian Workplace Agreements by industry employers in those states and Tasmania. Under the project plan, the OEA has seconded five officers, one to each participating state association, to develop

and promote Australian Workplace Agreement frameworks by the end of 2005.

In addition, the catering sector is considering advice by DEWR's Workplace Advisory Service on options for implementing certified agreements as some catering employers consider certified agreements to be more suitable to their employment patterns.

Future actions:

R&CA to continue to liaise with OEA and DEWR to encourage the up-take of Australian Workplace Agreements and certified agreements in the restaurant and catering industry.

RECOMMENDATION 18. Initiate and support award reform and national consistency.

Responsible Industry

Progress to date: Commenced with ongoing support required

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short term.

In June 2004, R&CA noted that its members were concerned about the outdated award classification definitions and structures, and the nature and structure of award penalty rates governing the industry. The industry considers that some of these issues can be addressed through agreement making.

Additionally, DEWR has provided R&CA with a comparative table of federal award conditions in the industry. This work was provided as a building block for further work by the state and territory associations, given the prevalence of state awards in the industry. Under the comparative table provided to R&CA in June 2003, provisions across 11 federal awards were

detailed and compared with over 30 issues or provisions.

Future actions:

The industry is to progress this recommendation over the 2005-06 financial year.

A review of classifications contained in the current awards is required. R&CA will raise this issue directly with the Australian Liquor Hospitality & Miscellaneous Workers Union.

RECOMMENDATION 20. Consider the needs of restaurant and catering businesses in all matters relating to unfair dismissal laws.

Responsibility: Industry / Australian Government (DEWR, including through engagement with state and territory governments)

Progress to date: Near completion

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short term.



In 2004, the Australian Government introduced legislation to exempt businesses that employ fewer than 20 employees from the federal unfair dismissal provisions. Draft legislation was also introduced to the Australian Parliament that proposes to amend the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* to maintain the exemption for small business from redundancy payments by overturning the 2004 decision of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) to impose redundancy pay obligations on small businesses. Both Bills were still before the Parliament in early 2005.

The Workplace Advisory Service and R&CA are looking at the possibility of developing targeted information on unfair dismissal laws for small businesses in the industry. The OEA Small Business Template includes provisions to help employers interpret termination issues.

Future actions:

R&CA will continue to discuss with DEWR the development of targeted information on unfair dismissal laws for small businesses in the industry.

RECOMMENDATION 21: Promote national consistency in workers' compensation and workplace health and safety laws.

Responsible: Industry / Australian Government, including through engagement with state and territory governments

Progress to Date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

R&CA has been involved in ongoing collaboration between the Australian, state and

territory governments to progress a national framework for workers' compensation that incorporates nationally consistent insurance premium setting, benefit structure, insurance regulation and national insurance mechanisms. R&CA wrote to The Hon Kevin Andrews MP, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, in 2004 indicating its support for the establishment of the Australian Safety and Compensation Council and requesting a role on the Council. In gaining a role on the Council, R&CA hopes to help develop more balanced occupational health and safety arrangements for the restaurant and catering sector that shift the emphasis from enforcement to education and prevention. The Australian Government is currently considering outcomes from consultation with key stakeholders before deciding on final arrangements for the establishment of the Australian Safety and Compensation Council, including its membership.

The Australian Government announced during the 2004 election campaign an initiative to fund small business occupational health and safety advisers. R&CA is assisting the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) with its application for advisers.

Future actions:

R&CA will continue to seek to have OH&S advisers employed in state associations until all states and territories have an adviser.



RECOMMENDATION 22:

Actively engage in the broader employment debate.

Responsible to: Industry / Australian Government

Progress to date: Commenced and ongoing

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short term.

Research being undertaken through the National Skills Shortages Strategy (NSSS) project will provide data for industry to better understand the impact of employment legislation and regulations on restaurant and catering businesses. It was agreed in June 2004 that DEWR's Occupational and Skills Analysis Team would liaise with R&CA on relevant data concerning R&CA's input to the NSSS project to progress the research.

Further, the Action Agenda Implementation Group and R&CA continue to actively engage in debate with stakeholders on broader issues, such as employment growth, wage levels, productivity, and the capacity of employers to pay increased wages. The use of increased communication and collaboration within industry may assist in the implementation of this recommendation.

In addition, R&CA is coordinating the Project Steering Group for the food and hospitality project, as part of the NSSS. The project focuses on skills shortages and education and training issues, including:

- identifying shortages in non-cooking hospitality occupations;
- prioritising occupations by degree of industry need;
- developing strategies to address shortages;
- current industry use of information on the national VET system; and
- suitability of existing education and training resources.



Future actions:

R&CA will analyse and subsequently implement the outcomes of the NSSS research and food and hospitality projects in 2005.

It is expected that these projects will be completed by 2006. An analysis of the project outcomes will be provided in the 2006 implementation report.



KEY AREA

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

AIMS

- Improve industry sustainability through skilled marketing and promotion.
- Better understanding of consumer behaviour and market segments that assist marketing at the international, national, regional and individual businesses levels.
- Stronger collaboration between food, tourism and wine sectors.

RECOMMENDATION 23

Elevate the restaurant and catering industry's profile at the domestic (including local) and international levels including through possible use of, and leverage from, established government programs.

Responsibility: Marketing and Promotion Taskforce / Restaurant & Catering Australia (R&CA) (including constituent State Associations) / Tourism Australia

Project Status: Commenced and ongoing

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short to medium term.

A Marketing and Promotion Taskforce was established under R&CA, reporting to the Implementation Group. The Taskforce is charged with driving the marketing and promotion recommendations of the Action Agenda. The Taskforce has met on five occasions throughout 2004 and comprises representatives of key industry organisations and Tourism Australia.

R&CA was unsuccessful in its application for funding through the Australian Government's

Australian Tourism Development Program (ATDP) to develop a food and wine tourism atlas. The project proposed the collation of food and wine trails identified in the regions, a rating system based on the existing R&CA awards system and a profile of restaurants, which would be published in a food and wine tourism atlas of Australia.

The atlas project is intended to assist the coordination and sharing of information between the regional and state food and wine tourism coordinators throughout

Future action

The Taskforce will continue to work with industry and key bodies to progress the marketing and promotion of the sector and will submit a revised application for funding of the atlas project in the 2005 ATDP round.



RECOMMENDATION 24: Develop strategies that stimulate consumers to eat out more often and spend more when they do.

Responsible Agency: Marketing and Promotion Taskforce, R&CA (including constituent State Associations) / Tourism Australia

Implementation Status: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium to long term³ before becoming an ongoing responsibility of industry.

During 2004, Roy Morgan Research undertook a consumer segmentation study into the Australian dining out market. The study was commissioned by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources on behalf of the Marketing and Promotion Taskforce.

R&CA has now engaged a consultant to use the findings of this study to undertake initial stages of a communications strategy. This will form the basis of a future generic marketing campaign for the industry. The initial phases of the project are being funded by industry and Tourism Australia. The Action Agenda Marketing and Promotions Taskforce will seek industry input throughout the development of the strategy.

3. Long term strategies are aimed to be commenced within two years from March 2004.

The Taskforce aims to encourage state and territory tourism organisations to develop a collaborative and complementary approach to the marketing of food and wine tourism in order to leverage marketing efforts. In March 2005, the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism agreed to support food and wine marketing as part of the wider generic marketing campaign.

Future progress

The Taskforce will continue to work with industry to develop and implement the communications strategy. The Taskforce will continue to work with state and territory tourism organisations to develop a collaborative and complementary approach to the marketing of food and wine tourism.

RECOMMENDATION 25. Initiate industry-specific market research, including needs-based consumer segmentation, from which the industry, especially regional businesses, can strategically plan.

Responsibility: Marketing and Promotion Taskforce, R&CA (including constituent State Associations) / Tourism Australia / Australian Government (the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Progress to date: Completed

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the short to medium term before becoming an ongoing responsibility of industry.

As outlined in Recommendation 24, a study that identifies different consumer segmentation for restaurant and catering has been completed. These segments will now be targeted through

the generic campaign currently being developed in consultation with industry.

The availability of industry-specific market research has also improved through the development of a niche study of culinary tourism published in 2004 by Tourism Research Australia. As a result, amendments have been made to the International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey questions, which will help to capture information that profiles and segments food and wine tourism markets and quantifies their dollar value spend.

Finally, R&CA has held meetings with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to explore ways to increase the collection frequency of key industry data.

Future progress

R&CA will continue to liaise with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to monitor developments with data issues. It is anticipated that any changes would be introduced from the 2006-07 reference year, following user consultation with a view to refining the program. Specifically, a service industries user review is planned for early 2005, and a revised annual collection program for service industries is expected to be available later in 2005.



RECOMMENDATION 25: Foster a more cohesive industry by collaborative partnerships with the wine and tourism industries.

Responsibility: Marketing and Promotion Taskforce and R&CA (including constituent State Associations) / Wine Federation of Australia

Progress to date: Commenced and ongoing

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

Tourism Australia is incorporating and expanding on work undertaken by the Taskforce on Regional Food and Wine.

R&CA and the Wine Federation of Australia have agreed to develop a joint food and wine tourism strategy to commence from 1 July 2005. This arises from the recognition of the need for a joint approach to marketing and product development. The group met on 9 March 2005 to commence development of the strategy.

This is further supported by the outcome of the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism meeting in early 2005, which, as discussed in Recommendation 24, agreed to encourage state and territory tourism organisations to develop a collaborative and complementary approach to the marketing of food and wine tourism in order to leverage marketing efforts.

Future actions:

Workshop participation with state and regional food and wine tourism agencies have been proposed to help enhance collaboration among industry.

R&CA and the Wine Federation of Australia will continue to develop a joint strategy to align food and wine with more general 'tourism' experiences.

RECOMMENDATION 27: Strengthen industry skills in marketing, including in specialised industry product development, such as takeaways, healthy meals, pre-prepared meals, and investigate opportunities for export.

Responsibility: Industry / Marketing and Promotion Taskforce and R&CA (including constituent state associations) / Australian Government (Austrade, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Department of Transport and Regional Services (DoTARS))

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

It is anticipated that the communications strategy developed by PhD Creative for R&CA will assist with the implementation of this recommendation. The strategy will involve a review of data, stakeholder interviews and hypothesis testing undertaken to date. Following this review, the Taskforce will review the study and seek stakeholder input prior to proceeding further.

Through its representation on the Taskforce, Austrade is providing industry with valuable information about the exploration of export opportunities.

Future actions:

The Taskforce will continue to work with industry on the development of the communications campaign, and with Austrade on identifying export opportunities.

Success in increasing industry exports will be addressed in the 2006 implementation report.



KEY AREA

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

AIMS

- Greater industry uptake of technology and innovation to increase efficiency and competitiveness in management processes, design, product development, marketing and energy usage.
- Better understanding that innovation includes non-technological innovation such as changes in management processes, design, marketing, and collaboration.
- Greater business access to information on what appropriate technologies are available.

RECOMMENDATION 2B:

Identify future product, service and other needs for the industry then evaluate technologies to meet these.

Responsibility: Industry

Progress to date: Completed

A technology road mapping exercise was undertaken by Restaurant & Catering Australia (R&CA) using funding of \$70,000 under the Australian Government's Innovation Access Program, administered by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources. The exercise identified future product, service and other needs for the industry and provided an evaluation of technologies required to meet these needs. The exercise was finalised at the end of April 2004 and a report submitted to the Implementation Group outlining 11 recommendations. A summary of the report is available at www.restaurantcater.asn.au and is being distributed through industry trade publications. An average of 51 downloads of the document have been made per week, indicating a relatively high level of awareness and interest in the report.

R&CA is also convening a group of point of sale system providers to identify consistency issues for front of restaurant systems. The group has identified that 60 per cent of restaurants are using proprietary accounting systems that do not integrate with point of sale and credit card systems. The Taskforce believe there is scope for the industry to be proactive with technology providers and seek changes that are demand driven.

Future condition:

Action complete

The findings of the road mapping exercise will also be used to promote the value of industry specific and tailored technology to operators, with a view to impelling the industry to evolve to a more demand-driven use of technology.

RECOMMENDATION 29:

Encourage awareness of innovations relevant to the industry.

Responsibility: Industry / Service Industries Skills Council / Australian National Training Authority / Australian Government

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the long term.

The Service Industries Skills Council has agreed to assist in increasing the restaurant and catering industry's awareness of relevant innovations through the inclusion of technology and innovation skills and knowledge in the Hospitality Training Package.

The technology roadmapping exercise recommendations are being implemented by the R&CA Supply Chain Committee by way of a technology diffusion project, funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources' Innovation Access Program. The project will utilise the existing R&CA website (www.restaurantcater.asn.au) to provide specific, targeted information to assist the needs of industry. For example, separate technology information to meet the needs of restaurateurs compared to caterers.

Future actions:

Following receipt of the Australian Government funding, R&CA will implement the technology diffusion project.

RECOMMENDATION 30: Establish a register of new products, processes and services that suit the needs of the industry and can be accessed by operators.

Responsibility: R&CA / Australian Government.

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

Significant work has commenced on this recommendation. For example, a register of new products, processes and services that suit the needs of the industry and are accessible to operators was developed in early 2004. This portal has been promoted through the award processes of state and national restaurant associations. In addition, a link to the register has been established on the R&CA website (www.restaurantcater.asn.au) to enable easy access for association members.

Future actions:

The technology road map exercise recommended that an education program, which demonstrates to operators the benefits of this register, be developed. This recommendation will be progressed in 2005 and reported on in the 2006 implementation report.

RECOMMENDATION 31: Develop linkages with related industry working bodies to disseminate techniques and technologies.

Responsibility: Industry / Australian Government

Progress to date: Commenced

Strategies to achieve this recommendation are to be implemented in the medium term.

A Point of Sales forum was hosted by the Action Agenda Implementation Group in January 2005 to discuss Point of Sale issues. It is hoped that the forum will encourage the use of integrated Point of Sales systems for the restaurant and catering industry.

Future actions:

The R&CA Supply Chain Committee will develop a strategy to further progress this recommendation during 2005.



