

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 2
Output Group: 2.2 - New Apprenticeships

DEST Question No. E596_07

Senator Marshall provided in writing.

Question:

NECA/DEST Report 'Skill Shortage Project – Summary, May2006' Report

- a) Why was this report commissioned?
- b) What was the purpose of the research underlying this report?
- c) How much did this research cost and who undertook it?
- d) What process was used to determine who would undertake this research?
- e) Why didn't this report's steering committee include more State Training Authorities and Industry bodies?
- f) What involvement did the steering Committee Members (Steve Balzary, Peter Glynn, Peter Buck, Robyn Norris, Erik Scholz, Neville Palmer, Frank Russo, Steve Griffiths, David Madson, Brett Conran, Wes McKnight, Ken Gardner, Alan Major, Neil Miller, NSW TAFE, Ian Millner, Milcom Communications, Suzie Hewlett, Leela Darvall) have in the preparation of the report and the endorsement of the report findings?
- g) Is DEST aware of any of this steering committee as named in the report not being involved with the report's preparation or production?
- h) Does DEST require that research reports that purport to have a reference or steering committee to validate the process of research undertaken require that the steering group officially endorse the report
- i) If so, has this report met the DEST protocols for development and sign off?
- j) Does DEST believe that the body funded for the report is sufficiently qualified to ensure a wide array of industry stakeholders across Australia have been widely consulted and their views appropriately included in the report?
- k) What evaluation does DEST undertake of reports commissioned such as the *NECA/DEST 'Skills Shortage Project – Summary, May 2006' Report*?
- l) Does this evaluation affect future funding allocations or tenders for research projects or reports?
- m) Does DEST believe the assertion in the report (Page 1) that there is a lack of new and emerging technologies in the National Training Package revised for electro technology?
- n) Does DEST believe the assertion in the report (Page 1) that the 'requirements defined for an electrical license do not align with the work being undertaken by most electricians' given the regulatory requirements for electricians are based on the 66 essential capabilities coming out of electrical safety requirements?
- o) Does DEST believe the assertion in the report (Page 3) that Philippine trained lineworkers 'do not meet the regulator's requirements to work in Queensland... but were able to work as lineworkers in Queensland' is correct?

p) What happened in that particular case?

Answer:

NECA/DEST Report 'Skill Shortage Project – Summary, May 2006' Report

- a) The 'Skills Shortage Project – Summary - May 2006' report was not commissioned by the Department of Education, Science and Training.
- b) The 'Skills Shortage Project – Summary - May 2006' report purports to be a summary of a project titled 'Electrotechnology and Data Communications – Licensing, the Ageing Workforce and Industry Information Dissemination: Analysis of issues and development of solutions'.
- c) There was no cost to the Australian Government.
- d) This was a decision made by the National Electrical and Communications Association.
- e) The composition of steering committee was decided by the National Electrical and Communications Association.
- f) This was a decision made by the National Electrical and Communications Association.
- g) The Department of Education, Science and Training was made aware of two persons who claimed they were not involved in the preparation or production of the report. The issue of their involvement or otherwise is a matter for the National Electrical and Communications Association.
- h) Yes, it is standard practice for reports that are commissioned by the Department of Education, Science and Training to be formally endorsed by a steering committee.
- i) Not relevant.
- j) The Department of Education, Science and Training did not commission this report and had no input into assessing the suitability of the National Electrical and Communications Association to produce the report.
- k) The Department of Education, Science and Training does not evaluate projects it does not commission.
- l) As a general principle, the Department of Education, Science and Training would take into consideration the outcome of any evaluation it conducts of research projects or reports in considering new project proposals.
- m) The views in the 'Skill Shortage Project – Summary May 2006' are those of the author and do not represent the views of the Department of Education, Science and Training.
- n) The views in the 'Skill Shortage Project – Summary May 2006' are those of the author and do not represent the views of the Department of Education, Science and Training.
- o) The views in the 'Skill Shortage Project – Summary May 2006' report are those of the author and do not represent the views of the Department of Education, Science and Training.
- p) The Department of Education, Science and Training cannot comment on this particular case.