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Committee Secretary
Senate Education, Employment and Workplace
Relations Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



SERVICE SKILLS
AUSTRALIA

**The Industry Skills Council
for the Service Industries**

Service Industries Skills Council
ABN 37 107 591 864
Level 10, 171 Clarence Street
Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 4194
Sydney NSW 2001
Tel +61 2 8243 1200
Fax +61 2 8243 1299
www.serviceskills.com.au
info@serviceskills.com.au

Dear members of the Education, Employment and Workplace
Relations Legislation Committee

**RE: Inquiry into the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Bills 2010
[2011]**

Service Skills Australia welcomes the move to establish the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (NVR) and believes that these bills are critical for developing greater national consistency and ensuring higher quality standards across the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

Service Skills Australia (SSA) believes that the standards contained in the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) would not be enhanced or benefit from being included in this legislation. Though there is a need to strengthen these standards, embedding such changes into the new legislation will only serve to create future difficulty when further modifications are required.

Instead, SSA believes there are more practical approaches to addressing higher quality standards through Industry Skills Councils. With industry's primary concern being improvements to the quality of training, SSA recently developed and began implementing its industry recognition system of RTOs. Known as the "Right Way" program, this acts as a means to addressing the need for high quality standards in facilities, resources, training and assessment.

Likewise, in response to industry's concerns on how the prevailing measures of success for VET are affecting the quality of the VET experience, SSA recently conducted a thorough investigation of student non-completions of courses. The final report for this project, "Evaluation Frameworks for VET", demonstrates that there are substantial benefits to knowing about short-term reasons for withdrawal that are not currently captured in the national VET data system. This highlights a profound weakness in the sector that is impeding quality outcomes for all—students, providers, policy makers and enterprises who invest in training.



Finally, Service Skills Australia contends that instituting the NVR is paramount to the success of up-skilling the nation's workforce and, subsequently, the productivity of the economy. Such a move will greatly facilitate the nation's ability to meet the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) targets seeking to encourage and enable increased educational attainment of more Australians through post-secondary qualifications.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeanette Allen", with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the signature.

Jeanette Allen
Chief Executive Officer