



Education and Training

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

Dear Dr Batge

Thank you for your email of 24 June 2010 to Dr Jim Watterston inviting the ACT Department of Education and Training to make a submission to the Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee inquiry into Industry Skills Councils (ISCs). Dr Watterston has asked me to reply on his behalf.

The Department's own feedback from key industry stakeholders about the effectiveness of ISC consultation processes in the ACT has revealed a general need for improvement in the sensitivity and responsiveness to industry needs. That is, ISC consultation processes need to be based on methodologies that are sensitive enough to detect and accurately interpret industry needs. In turn, it is vital that valid and reliable data inform decisions about specific training initiatives in order that they are responsive to industry needs.

I note that the formal consultation processes of the ElectroComms and Energy Utilities Industry Skills Council (EE-Oz Training Standards) has been mentioned by Mr Phillip Bullock, Chair, Skills Australia as a national best practice model for other ISCs to follow. The Department would support this view.

The ACT is a small jurisdiction with some unique characteristics. ACT data gathered by ISCs for their annual Environmental Scans tend to be based on very small or non-representative samples of respondents, making generalisation from the national scene to the ACT situation questionable or uninformative.

A responsive and flexible training system is of critical importance for the ACT economy and ISCs have a crucial role to play in achieving this. The Department would welcome working more closely with ISCs to engage ACT industry and other VET stakeholders about their training needs, particularly in skill-shortage areas.

Yours sincerely

Leanne Cover
Executive Director
Tertiary and International Education
July 2010

Cc Dr Jim Watterston
Chief Executive