

Skilling Tasmania

Policy Consultation



Record of facilitated discussions from the Skilling Tasmania Training Forum held on October 30, 2007.

Skills Tasmania is a statutory body with responsibility to implement Tasmanian Government Policy on skills and training.

This document has been prepared as a record of discussion in a public consultation and will provide input to policy development.

A broad range of ideas and views generated through a discussion forum have been included in this paper for the purpose of stimulating discussion and feedback on policy matters.

Questions and ideas included in this document should be read in this context and should not be interpreted as being the views of, or necessarily supported by Skills Tasmania or the Tasmanian Government.

Theme	Discussion focused on the following areas
Communication: Transparency, demystification and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum indicated a role for Skills Tasmania in promoting workforce development and the value of training to industries – particularly small business. The role of RTOs would then follow • Indications that Skills Tasmania and the Department of Economic Development should work together on communicating benefits of workforce development and that current Economic Development programs such as the Better Workplaces Program are already working with small business • There needs to be more communication from Skills Tasmania regarding the differences between traineeships and apprenticeships and promotion of the value of both. • Skills Tasmania needs to be more involved in the promotion of VET to school aged people and in creating linkages between VET training and high income careers. • A “One Stop Shop” for communication and information on the training system would be beneficial • There needs to be more consultation directly between industry (employers) and training providers (RTO). • Skills Tasmania needs to re engineer and demystify the training system – this then needs to be explained to training providers and industry. This would cut down confusion for employers and streamline the system • Most training is non- funded or non accredited – this means data is not captured and we are not gaining a clear picture of the training system in Tasmania – this needs to be addressed.
Quality: Of training, delivery, products and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to encourage better performance of training providers through the creation of bench marks, performance criteria (both qualitative and quantitative) and performance rating systems • Recognition that “mavericks” still exist within the system and need to be managed for performance • Any performance management system needs to be separate from an auditing system and focus primarily on outcomes • The currency and industry knowledge of trainers needs to be assured and related to any performance management or rating system • There are substantial costs involved in assuring the quality of technical skills and industry knowledge of trainers – funding for PD and industry experiences would alleviate this. There may also be a benefit in exploring contract trainers who are closer to industry • There are differences between public and private and not for profit organisation in how they train their staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum indicated there may be a role for Skills Tasmania to facilitate training providers coming together to moderate and validate common packages and to assist industry to recognise specialist RTOs • The current system creates pressure for substandard outcomes – commencements not completions • Training packages restrict transportability of competencies between them • Funding and support to increase partnerships between public and private providers would increase the quality of facilities and training and maximise the use of public facilities – examples of partnering exist between Aurora and TAFE Tasmania and in East Gippsland. • Questions were raised regarding the Tasmania Tomorrow reforms and the impacts they will have on the current public/private divide – “public providers have the resources and private providers have the flexibility”.
<p>Choice: On what and how training is delivered and funded</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is difficult to gain RPL if you are not connected to an employer. Individuals should be able to choose options for RPL that are funded. • Current systems for training packages, qualifications and funding are rigid and lack flexibility, they therefore limit choice • Current user choice policies do not support existing employees developing in the workplace. You must change employer to gain funds • Quarantines of certain trades to TAFE is a restrictive practice that limits choice to individuals • The playing field is not level – private RTOs cannot compete with TAFE regarding the cost of delivery of higher level qualifications – this restricts choice • Tas Skills funding restricts choice – a voucher system would allow greater choice of RTO to individuals and businesses • Training packages are inflexible – some people or businesses may not want the entire qualification. It is difficult to gain funding for this and it therefore restricts the choice to individuals.
<p>Funding: To increase choice and innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need new and innovative funding arrangements that increase the choices for industry • Who pays is an issue – many clients are not paying the real cost of training • The current funding models are across industry – 1 size fits all. They need to be more flexible and tailored

	<p>to the individual needs of industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency of funding arrangements for different qualifications so RTO's can see rationale of dollars attached to qualifications between different states. • Voucher systems would give greater flexibility and choice than TasSkills • The playing fields for funding needs to be more level – eg larger public providers competing with smaller private providers for the same pool of money • Funding of Cert II level training should remain – it is an important introduction to the training system • Non accredited training should be funded • Individuals or industry bodies should be funded for training rather than just RTOs • Annual bids for funding are not responsive or flexible. A rolling system would be better • Skills sets and individual units of competency should be funded rather than full qualifications • Wages – this was flagged as an industrial issue not a training issue. It was also noted that employers can pay their trainees what ever they like and many of them do pay above award wages. • Tasmania Tomorrow reforms will see more training delivered in industry. With the proposed Government Business Enterprise (delivering cert III and above). This will reduce issue of funding and a level playing field for funding. Quarantines will not fit the new model. • There are opportunities for funding partnerships between public and private training providers – particularly in relation to higher level qualifications
<p>Future Leaders: Employability skills, attitudes and Generation Y</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generation Y have very different expectations of the workforce. Employers and RTOs need to cater more for their needs – statistics indicate Generation Y follow strong leadership. • We also need to ensure we do not discriminate against or overcompensate for Generation Y • Whose responsibility is it to provide attitude and employability skills – school, trainers – and are these skills actually trainable? – The consensus was some of these skills are trainable. However, they need to be supported and fostered in the workplace (for example including employability skills in selection criteria) and at home and the collaboration between schools, the training system and workplaces was essential to ensure employability skills and attitudes were developed. • If trainers are expected to deliver basic employability skills and to foster attitudes then they need to be resourced to do so.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core technical skills and employability skills should be separated. Examples were given including a common first year apprenticeship focusing on core employability skills and attitudes.
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