



Training Accreditation Council
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



VET Vital Statistics Report

FROM 1 JANUARY TO 30 JUNE

2008

www.tac.wa.gov.au

Activities Report

The Training Accreditation Council (the Council) is the registering and course accrediting body for vocational education and training (VET) in Western Australia.

This document highlights the activity of the Council during the period from 1 January to 30 June 2008. In addition to the vital statistics provided on this page, the document contains analysis of the data and additional information such as the outcomes of client satisfaction surveys.

The data in this report provide a comprehensive picture of the operation of the VET sector in Western Australia and the Council's activities as the registering body in this state. It also includes data on the Council's skills recognition function under the Vocational Education and Training Act 1996.

Secretariat services to the Council are provided by the Department of Education Services, referred to in this document as 'the secretariat'.

The following table contains a summary of VET activity from 1 January to 30 June 2008 compared to the preceding two reporting periods.

<i>RTOs (see p. 5)</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 08</i>	<i>Jul-Dec 07</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 07</i>
<i>Total RTOs</i>	<i>1,442</i>	<i>1,394</i>	<i>1,363</i>
<i>WA RTOs</i>	<i>456</i>	<i>443</i>	<i>440</i>
<i>Interstate RTOs delivering in WA</i>	<i>986</i>	<i>951</i>	<i>923</i>
<i>Regional WA RTOs</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>WA RTOs delivering overseas</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>WA RTOs deregistered</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Audit Activity (see p.9)</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 08</i>	<i>Jul-Dec 07</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 07</i>
<i>Initial registration</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Renewal of registration</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>Extension to scope</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Monitoring audits</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Accreditation reviews</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Accreditation (see p. 11)</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 08</i>	<i>Jul-Dec 07</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 07</i>
<i>Total of accredited courses</i>	<i>389</i>	<i>403</i>	<i>394</i>
<i>Skills recognition (see p. 11)</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 08</i>	<i>Jul-Dec 07</i>	<i>Jan-Jun 07</i>
<i>Trade certificates issued</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>51</i>

Responses to the Council's client satisfaction survey are also included, beginning on page 14. The results are excellent and are testament to the courtesy and professionalism of the auditors on the Council's Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) auditor panel.

In addition, 92% of respondents stated that the audit process had added value to their business.

Implementation of Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) 2007

This reporting period covers the second six months of implementation of AQTF 2007 from 1 July 2007. AQTF 2007 includes new outcomes-focused standards for both Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and registering bodies, such as the Training Accreditation Council (the Council) in Western Australia, new standards for accrediting bodies (the Council in Western Australia) and a range of supporting documentation for both RTOs and registering and accrediting bodies.

The *AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies* and the *AQTF 2007 National Guidelines for Risk Management* provide a framework for Council to determine where its audit and monitoring resources will be focussed. Through this nationally consistent risk management process, those training organisations which are delivering high-quality training and assessment outcomes receive less audit activity by the Council. Council focuses audit attention on those RTOs assessed as presenting greater risk to the achievement of quality outcomes for their clients and the VET system in general.

Audits conducted by the Council are in accordance with the *AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies* and the *Audit Handbook*, a reference guide for conducting audits of training organisations against the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration*. Any non compliance identified at audit is processed in accordance with the *National Guideline for Managing Non-Compliance*.

Other supporting documentation being implemented by the Council as a part of AQTF 2007 includes the *National Guideline for Responding to Complaints about Vocational Education and Training Quality*; *National Guideline for Industry Regulator Engagement*; and the *National Guideline for Conducting Audits of the Interstate Operations of an RTO*.

All of these supporting documents are enhancing national consistency in the registration and accreditation processes in the VET sector. They are publicly available on the national website, www.training.com.au which is the definitive source for all AQTF 2007 related information and publications.

The transition to AQTF 2007 and the first twelve months of operation has been smooth and no issues have been brought to the attention of the Council in Western Australia. Anecdotal evidence suggests that RTOs are finding AQTF 2007 easier to work with and more closely aligned to their business requirements. This is borne out by responses to the Council's client services survey, to which 92% of respondents agreed that the audit process added value to their business.

Policies of the Training Accreditation Council

The Council, as the Western Australian regulatory authority for VET, develops policies for implementation by RTOs in this state. These policies are available on the Council's website at www.tac.wa.gov.au under *Policies and Guidelines* and relate to the operation of the VET sector in Western Australia.

In this reporting period, the following policies were developed and endorsed by the Council:

- ***Protection of Fees paid in Advance***

This policy outlines the Council's definition of 'fees paid in advance' and is intended to assist RTOs in determining how they manage the collection fees paid in advance. RTOs are required to adopt one of the options that have been approved by the Council in order to meet compliance with the Condition of Registration.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that mechanisms are in place to protect the student's investment and provide access to funds or a comparable course acceptable to the student at no additional cost, in the event that the RTO ceases to operate or is unable to provide the services outlined in the contract with the student.

- ***Risk Management Policy for at risk RTOs***

This policy outlines the process for identification of at risk RTOs and the risk management responses that will be implemented by the Council to minimise risks to students and VET clients in the event that significant non compliance with the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration are identified.

RTOs that are in receipt of public funding from the Department of Education and Training's User Choice or Competitively Allocated Training (CAT) programs should refer to the *Joint Risk Management Policy for at risk RTOs in Receipt of Public Funding*.

- ***Joint Risk Management Policy for at risk RTOs in Receipt of Public Funding***

The Council and the Department of Education and Training (DET) are committed to assuring the quality of the VET sector and maximising publicly funded training outcomes.

This policy outlines the process for identification of at risk RTOs and the management responses (risk responses) that will collaboratively be implemented by the Council and DET to:

- minimise risks to students and VET clients; and
- protect publicly funded training outcomes.

The policy is applicable to all RTOs registered by the Council who are in receipt of public funds through either Competitively Allocated Training or User Choice funding. This policy is not applicable to RTOs administered by a State, Territory or Commonwealth Government agency.

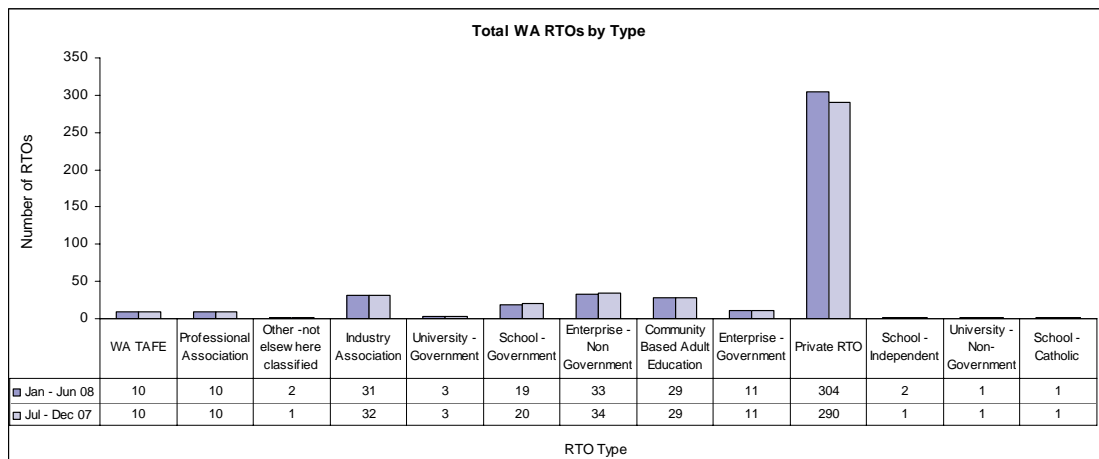
The Council regularly reviews and updates policies as a part of its continuous improvement cycle.

RTOs in Western Australia

At the end of June 2008, a total of 1,442 organisations were registered to deliver nationally recognised training in Western Australia. Of these organisations, 456 were registered with the Council in Western Australia and 986 were registered by other states/territories. Forty six of the 456 RTOs registered with the Council were also delivering VET under AQTF 2007 in countries other than Australia.

The following table shows the Western Australian RTOs by type of business, comparing this reporting period to the previous reporting period:

Graph 1



This graph displaying RTOs by type of organisation has been amended from previous editions of *VET Vital Statistics* and now aligns with the AVETMISS standard for data collection.

Western Australian RTOs by region

The table below shows the regional distribution of Western Australian RTOs as at 30 June 2008, based on their head office location.

Table 1

Head office location	Jan – Jun 08	Jul - Dec 07	Jan - Jun 07
Perth	366	359	354
Interstate	6	5	6
Gascoyne	2	1	1
Goldfields-Esperance	6	6	7
Great Southern	6	6	6
Kimberley	7	7	7
Mid West	7	8	9
Peel	14	13	9
Pilbara	6	4	5
South West	31	29	31
Wheatbelt	5	5	5
	456	443	440

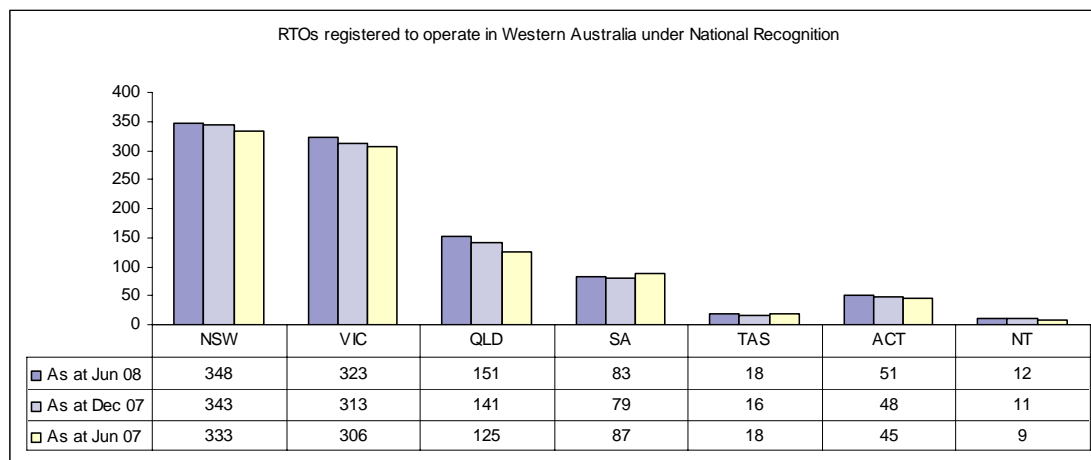
The table shows a steady increase in the number of metropolitan RTOs over the three reporting periods. Most of the other regions have either remained static or increased only slightly, however Peel has increased by 55%.

Nationally Recognised RTOs

The total number of RTOs registered by other state/territory registering bodies as at 30 June 2008 to deliver in Western Australia under national recognition was 986. It should be noted that these figures represent intent and do not reflect actual delivery by interstate RTOs. Some RTOs who register with their primary recognition authority to operate in Western Australia fail to do so for a variety of reasons.

The following graph shows the number of RTOs from each state or territory registered to operate in Western Australia as at 30 June 2008.

Graph 2



The graph shows a steady increase over the three reporting periods in the number of interstate RTOs registered to deliver in Western Australia, with the exception of South Australia where the figure is less than for the same reporting period in 2007 and Tasmania, which has remained the same. Most of the interstate RTOs registered to deliver in Western Australia are drawn from the three large states of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

AQTF 2007 Activity

The Council's functions under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* are to register and de-register training organisations and to accredit courses in the vocational education and training sector in Western Australia. As the Western Australian body responsible for registration and course accreditation in the VET sector, the Council is responsible for implementation of AQTF 2007.

Applications Considered by the Council

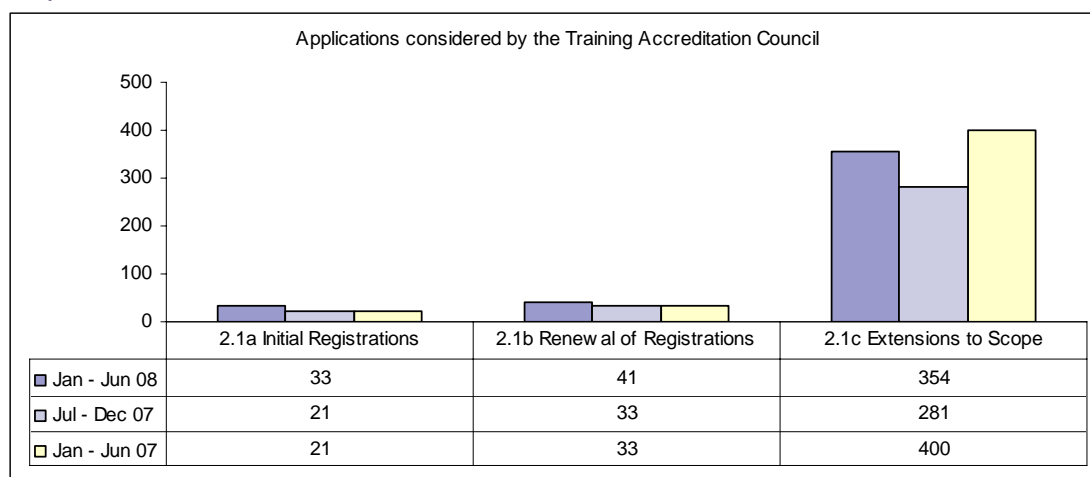
During the reporting period, there were five full Council meetings where the Council considered applications for registration and course accreditation, as well as national and state policies and any emerging issues within the VET sector. Full Council meetings were held every six weeks. A number of special meetings were also held during this period to consider matters of an urgent nature.

The Council has an Executive Committee that meets every two weeks between full Council meetings to consider registration or accreditation applications to the Council so

that Council can provide timely responses to applicants. There were seven Executive Committee meetings during the reporting period.

Applications for initial registration, renewal of registration, extension to scope of registration and course accreditations were considered every fortnight, either by the Executive Committee or the full Council. Graph 3 compares the number of applications considered by the Council during this period with the preceding two reporting periods.

Graph 3



Of the 354 extensions to scope, 111 were extensions into higher qualifications within current industry areas, or the addition of new industry areas.

It should be noted that the data do not identify the number of audits conducted. These are reported on page 9.

Of the 33 initial registration applications considered by Council, 5 were rejected.

No RTOs were de-registered, although the Council entered one RTO into the de-registration process prior to 30 June 2008.

Three RTOs voluntarily relinquished their registration during this reporting period. One organisation decided to deliver through partnership arrangements, the operation of another RTO in Perth shut down and the third RTO closed due to lack of business.

Risk Assessment

AQTF 2007 introduced a *National Guideline for Risk Assessment* to enhance national consistency across the VET sector. The Guideline provides for all applications to state/territory registering bodies for initial registration, renewal of registration or extension to scope to be assessed for the purpose of risk management. This ensures

that RTOs with a low risk profile are recognised and may be audited less than RTOs with a higher risk profile.

Details of the risk assessment process and the criteria for determining an RTO's risk rating are contained in the AQTF 2007 *National Guideline for Risk Assessment*, which can be accessed through the Council's website at www.tac.wa.gov.au.

During the reporting period, 199 registration applications, including extension to scope, were received. Of these, 150 were assessed as low risk, 21 were assessed as medium risk and 7 were assessed as high risk. No risk rating was assigned to the remaining 21 applications as they were initial registration applications and the Council is not able to determine a risk rating for initial applications for registration.

Of the 199 applications received, 50% did not require an audit, 32% required a site visit audit and 18% required an external desk audit to be conducted. Although 150 of the applications received were assessed as low risk, which would indicate that an audit was not required, there are other indicators that are taken into consideration in determining whether a desk audit or site audit is required.

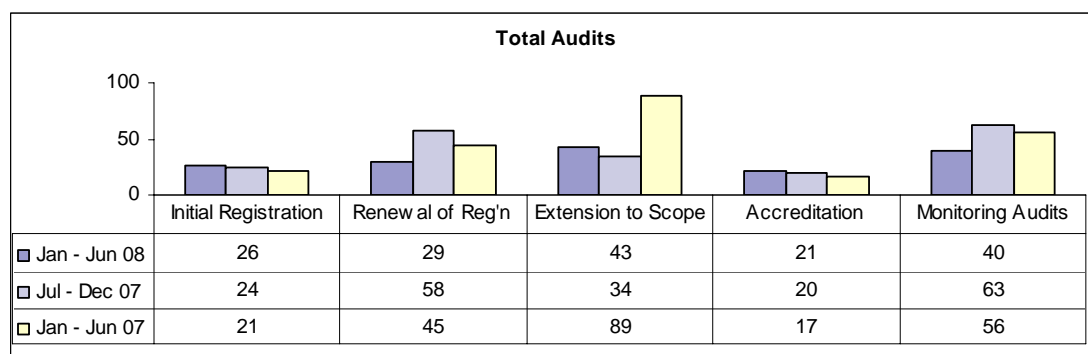
Audit Activity

The audit activity undertaken during this reporting period was in accordance with the requirements of the AQTF 2007 *Standards for Registering Bodies*, the *National Guideline for Risk Management* and the *Audit Handbook*. Audits such as initial registration, renewal of registration, extension to scope of registration or review of an application for course accreditation, were initiated by the RTO.

Other audits were initiated by the Council and are indicated in Graph 4 under 'Monitoring Audits'. These audits included the audit that is conducted within the first year of registration; follow-up audits where required; RTOs not audited in the last three years, and audits authorised by the Council to investigate a complaint.

The graph below indicates that 159 audits were undertaken during the reporting period from 1 January to 30 June 2008.

Graph 4



There is often a discrepancy between the number of applications considered by the Council and the number of audits undertaken. This is due to the fact that applications may be received within one reporting period and audits undertaken in another reporting period.

Moderation

To ensure the professionalism and consistency of auditors, a number of moderation workshops were conducted with the AQTF auditors during this reporting period. Two of these were conducted by the Council's secretariat in February and May. It is mandatory for auditors to attend these state moderation forums, which provide professional development, discussion of any issues that may have arisen and case studies to maximise consistency of outcomes.

The National Registration and Accreditation Technical Committee (NRATC) held a national moderation forum for AQTF auditors across Australia. The forum was hosted by the Northern Territory and held in Darwin in May 2008 and included representatives from Western Australia.

Management of Complaints

During this reporting period, complaints continued to be managed in accordance with the Council's published complaints policy, which is available from the Council's website at www.tac.wa.gov.au.

From 1 January to 30 June 2008, 16 complaints were lodged with the Council against RTOs registered by the Council and one complaint was lodged against an RTO registered by New South Wales.

Individual complaints often involve more than one standard. The complaints received covered all three standards with the majority of complaints relating to:

- training and assessment strategies and staff, facilities, equipment and training and assessment materials (Elements 1.2 and 1.3);
- assessment, including Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (Element 1.5 a, b and c); and
- most of the elements of Standard Two, which relate to principles of access and equity and maximising outcomes for clients.

At the end of the reporting period, 11 complaints had been closed and five remained open.

No complaints were received against the Council during the reporting period.

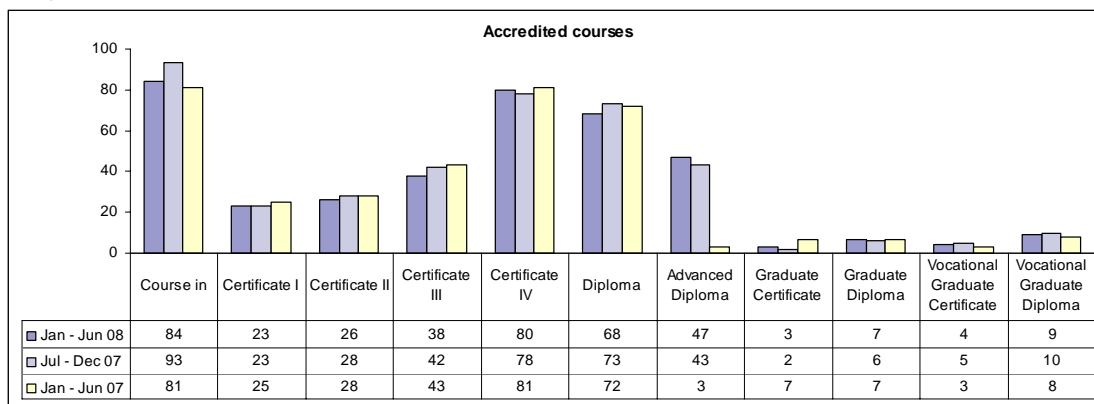
Course Accreditation

Courses are accredited by the Council to meet training needs not addressed by endorsed Training Packages. The Council will not accredit a course if a Training Package qualification exists that can meet the same training outcome through customisation.

During the reporting period, 6 courses were considered by the Council for accreditation and 20 courses considered for re-accreditation. The Council also considered 30 applications for extension of accreditation.

The graph below shows the total accredited courses by Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level at the end of this reporting period and for the last two reporting periods. There are currently 389 Western Australian accredited courses.

Graph 5



It should be noted that the previous edition of *VET Vital Statistics* showed the total number of Graduate Diplomas at the end of the January to June 07 reporting period as 82. This figure was incorrect due to an error in data extraction from the database. The correct number was 7, which is now reflected in Graph 5.

Skills Recognition

One of the Council's functions under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* is skills recognition. Council exercises this function to recognise skills leading to the issuance of a trade certificate in designated trade areas to successful applicants who have not undertaken an indentured apprenticeship.

From January to June 2008, Council issued 103 trade certificates. This represents a significant increase over the previous reporting period and more than double the number of trade certificates issued in the same reporting period in 2007. The increase can be attributed to an increase in the number of organisations endorsed by the Council to provide skills recognition services as agents of the Council in the automotive and hospitality industries under the Council's skills recognition policy.

The result of the Council's skills recognition process is a significant boost to the number of tradespeople in industries experiencing skills shortages.

The following table shows the distribution across trades:

Table 2

Trade	Jan - Jun 08	Jul - Dec 07	Jan - Jun 07
Automotive Electrician	2	0	0
Automotive Technician	23	3	0
Baking (Combined Pastrycooking and Breadmaking)	1	0	0
Bricklaying	0	2	4
Carpentry and Joinery	9	3	6
Chef	20	9	1
Cooking	1	0	9
Engineering Tradesperson (Fabrication)	6	9	5
Engineering Tradesperson (Mechanical)	18	12	8
Haidressing	2	5	1
Painting and Decorating	1	0	0
Panel Beater	0	1	0
Pastrycooking	0	1	0
Plastering	1	5	1
Roof Plumbing	3	3	3
Roof Tiling	3	0	0
Stonemasonry	0	1	0
Tilelaying	4	4	4
Wall and Ceiling Fixer	7	2	7
Wall and Floor Tiling (Housing)	0	1	2
Vehicle Body Builder	2	0	0
	103	61	51

These trade certificates were issued on the basis of skills recognition services offered by some RTOs and some Industry Training Councils endorsed by the Council to offer skills recognition services on behalf of the Council, in accordance with the Council's skills recognition policy, which is available on the Council's website at www.tac.wa.gov.au.

The organisations endorsed by the Council are included in Table 3.

Table 3

Registered Training Organisations	Industry Training Councils
Swan TAFE	Building and Construction Industry Training Council
Challenger TAFE	Food and Beverage Industry Training Council
Caterpillar Institute (WA) Pty Ltd	Light Manufacturing Industry Training Council (WA) Inc
Asstock Shoreside Holdings Pty Ltd and Westcolt Pty Ltd t/as Regional Training Services	Automotive Training Australia (WA) Inc
Perth Hospitality Professionals Pty Ltd t/as Australian School of Tourism and Hotel Management and t/as AFA Travel and Tourism	Metals, Manufacturing and Services Industry Training Council Inc
	Wholesale, Retail and Personal Services Industry Training Council of WA Inc
	Hospitality & Tourism Industry Training Council Inc

Sector Development

The Council is committed to assisting RTOs to understand and comply with the AQTF 2007. Accordingly, information sessions were conducted to provide information on the obligations and responsibilities associated with operating as an RTO and the requirements of AQTF 2007.

Forty “one-to-one” registration information sessions were provided by staff from the Council’s secretariat. These information sessions covered the VET system and policies including AQTF 2007 and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); Training Packages; the rights and responsibilities of RTOs; alternatives to registration; and, the application, registration and audit process. Where required, information was also provided on course accreditation.

No workshops were conducted during the reporting period. Most sector development is undertaken by the Department of Education and Training who provide a variety of professional development opportunities for VET practitioners.

Results of client satisfaction surveys

At the conclusion of every audit, a client satisfaction survey is sent to the RTO. The surveys inform the Council on the level of client satisfaction with the audit services provided by the Council's secretariat and the panel of AQTF 2007 auditors. The surveys are analysed by secretariat staff and used to inform continuous improvement in the provision of services to the Council's clients. They are also discussed with auditors during performance management interviews.

The first questions ask the respondent to indicate what sources of information were used in preparing for the audit, which were the most useful and whether the information was sufficient or insufficient in describing the audit process. The responses indicate that the Council's website, information sessions and formal correspondence from the Council were the most used and were found to be the most useful.

The survey then asks the respondent to provide information about the auditor and the audit process, such as how clearly the auditor described the audit process during the entry interview; whether the auditor was courteous during the audit; whether the auditor clearly explained what was required; and, whether the auditor listened to the respondent during the audit.

Ninety six percent of respondents replied that the audit process was clearly described during the entry interview; 100% of respondents found the auditor to be courteous, to have clearly explained what was required and to have listened carefully to the respondent during the audit. This is an excellent result and reflects the professionalism and expertise of the Council's panel of AQTF auditors.

In response to Q10, which asks the respondent to comment on areas for improvement in the auditor's performance, the following is a selection of comments from respondents:

[Name of auditor] was excellent, very friendly and helpful.

[Name of auditor] was great. Understood our industry and gave very helpful suggestions and sources for additional information.

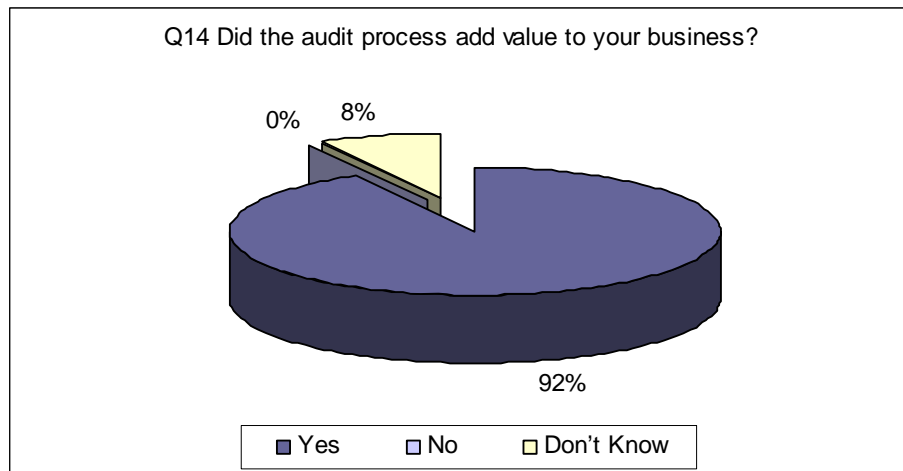
None – [name of auditor] was extremely positive and complimentary of the effort which had been put into this audit.

The auditor's performance was more than satisfactory. The auditor was thorough and gave the RTO operator a clear picture of what is required.

The auditor provided me with information pre-audit and on the day explained what was going to happen etc. He was very clear with his information and listened well and was flexible in collecting evidence.

The final question on the survey asks the respondent whether the audit process has added value to their business. This is an important question for the Council as it provides an indication of the extent to which RTOs are viewing the standards and the audit process as a measure of their business performance, rather than a regulatory burden of little value.

Graph 6



The responses indicate that 92% of respondents found the audit process added value to their business. This is an excellent result and is an increase of 3% over the preceding reporting period.

The Council and the secretariat strive to ensure that audits are a transparent, positive and affirming, albeit often stressful, experience for the staff of RTOs. Audits are an opportunity for organisations to test the health of the systems and processes that have been put in place to achieve the best outcomes for their clients.