

VET Vital Statistics



Training Accreditation Council
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Activities Report

January to June 2007

The Training Accreditation Council is the registering/course accrediting body for VET in Western Australia.

Secretariat services to the Council are provided by the Department of Education Services through the Education and Training Regulation Directorate, referred to in this document as 'the secretariat' (formerly known as the Office of TAC).

This document highlights the activity of the Training Accreditation Council during the period from 1 January 2007 to 30 June 2007. 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.

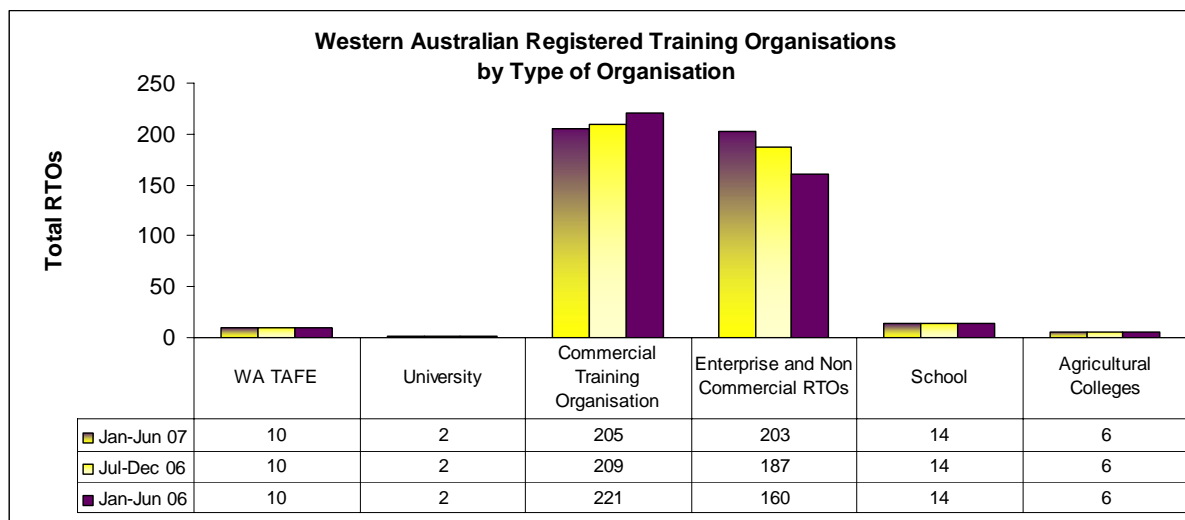
The survey results show that **88% of respondents found the audit process added value to their business.**

The data provides a comprehensive picture of the operation of the vocational education and training sector. Some stakeholders may find this data important in planning or projecting their business activities.

RTOs (see p.2)	Jan-June 07	Jul-Dec 06	Jan-June 06
Total RTOs	1,363	1,286	1,228
WA RTOs	440	433	413
Regional WA RTOs	86	82	81
Interstate RTOs	923	853	815
WA RTOs delivering overseas	86	40	15
WA RTOs deregistered	3	3	1
Audit Activity (see p. 5)	Jan-June 07	Jul-Dec 06	Jan-Jun 06
Initial registration	21	23	25
Renewal of registration	45	5	0
Extensions to scope	89	91	49
Accreditation reviews	17	53	48
Monitoring audits	56	60	57
Accreditation (see p. 6)	Jan-June 07	Jul-Dec 06	Jan-Jun 06
Total of accredited courses	394	415	385
Skills recognition (see p 7)	Jan-June 07	Jul-Dec 06	Jan-Jun 06
Trade equivalent certificates issued	61	64	22
Sector development by number attending (see p 7)	Jan-Jun 07	Jul-Dec 06	Jan-Jun 06
Registration Information Session	51	9	36
AQTF Standards Workshop	35		13
'Help ... the Auditor is coming'	20	2	4
Regional workshops	106		0
AQTF 2007 Implementation Workshops and Information Sessions	565	N/A	N/A
Client survey results (see p. 8)			

Registered Training Organisations in Western Australia

At the end of June 2007, a total of 1,363 organisations were registered to deliver nationally recognised training in Western Australia. Of these organisations, 440 were registered with the Training Accreditation Council (the Council) in Western Australia. The following table shows the Western Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) by type of business, comparing this reporting period to the previous two:



As the graph shows, the increase in enterprise and non-commercial RTOs has continued to grow over the three reporting periods. These RTOs include organisations that only deliver in-house training or non-commercial training to specific target groups. The number of commercial training organisations has reduced slightly. The number of TAFE colleges, universities, schools and agricultural colleges registered with the Council has remained the same over the three reporting periods.

Regional Registered Training Organisations

The table below shows the distribution of WA RTOs based on their head office location.

Location	Jun-07	Dec-06	Jun-06
Perth	354	349	332
Interstate	6	6	5
WA Regional RTOs			
Gascoyne	1	1	1
Goldfields-Esperance	7	6	6
Great Southern	6	7	7
Kimberley	7	7	7
Mid West	9	9	9
Peel	9	9	9
Pilbara	5	5	4
South West	31	29	28
Wheatbelt	5	5	5
	440	433	413

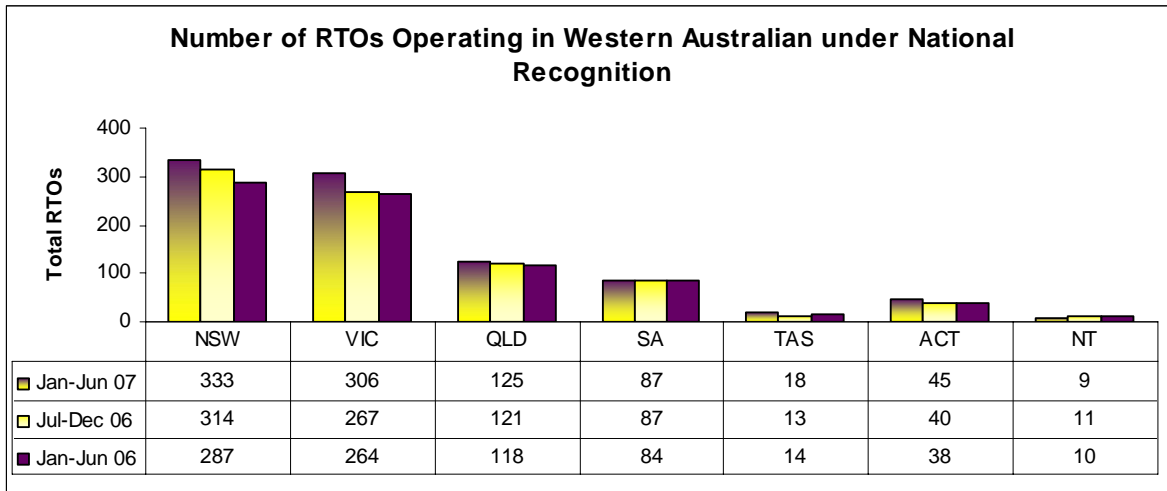
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The number of RTOs operating in the Perth metropolitan area has increased by five over the last six months. The distribution of RTOs in regional areas has varied little since June 2006, other than the South West Region, which has seen an increase of three RTOs in the last year.

Nationally Recognised Registered Training Organisations

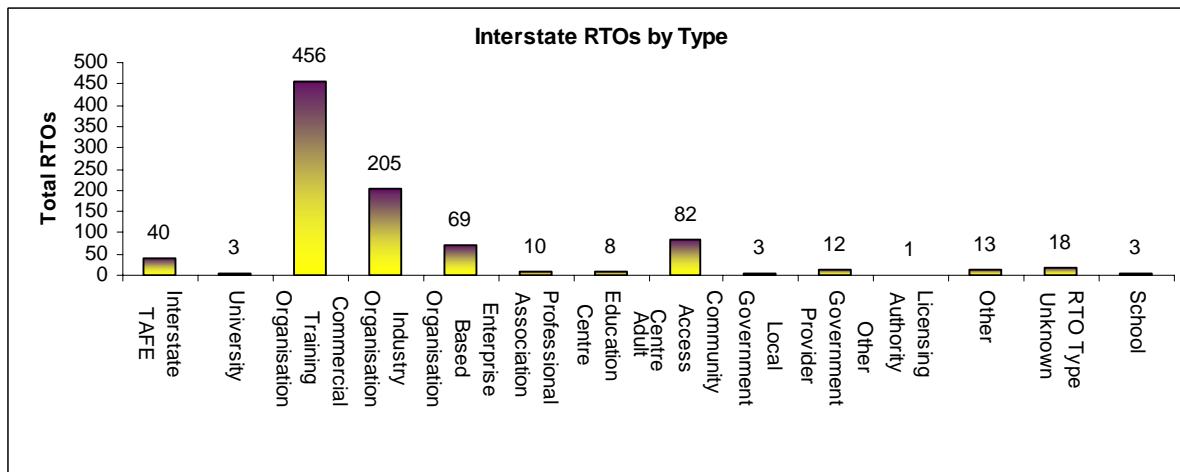
The total number of RTOs registered by other registering/course accrediting bodies at 30 June 2007 to deliver in Western Australia under national recognition was 923. It should be noted that these figures do not reflect actual delivery by interstate RTOs. Most RTOs register with their primary recognition authority to deliver in Western Australia and for a variety of reasons fail to follow through with delivery in this state.

The following graph shows the number of RTOs from each state or territory registered to deliver in Western Australia.



As expected, most of the interstate RTOs operating in Western Australia are registered in either New South Wales or Victoria. All states/territories, with the exception of South Australia which has remained static, have increased their interest in delivering in Western Australia. The greatest increase in RTOs registered in other states/territories to deliver in Western Australia comes from Victoria.

The following graph identifies the type of RTOs registered to deliver nationally recognised training in Western Australia.



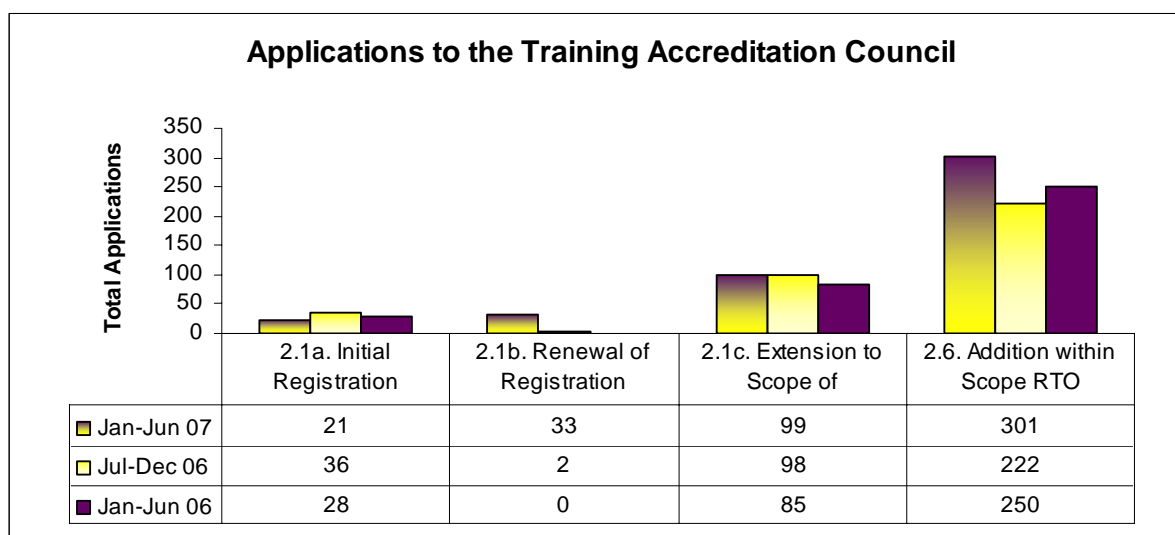
Australian Quality Training Framework Activity

The Council is required under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* 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 registering/course accrediting body, the Council is also responsible for implementation of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).

Applications to the Training Accreditation Council

The Council meets every two months and an Executive Committee meets every two weeks between Council meetings. Applications for initial registration, renewal of registration, extension to scope and course accreditations are considered every fortnight, either by the Executive Committee or the Council. During the reporting period the Council met thirteen times, of which four were full Council meetings and nine were Executive meetings.

The graph below compares the number of applications to the Council during this period with the preceding two reporting periods.



There has been a considerable reduction in initial registrations during January to June 2007, which could reflect a reluctance to apply for registration prior to 1 July 2007 when the new AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration come into effect. People may have delayed submission of their application so that they could be a part of the new outcomes-focused system from 1 July 2007.

The increase in applications for renewal of registration in the January to June 2007 reporting period reflects completion of the transition from the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF) with a registration period of three years to the AQTF with a registration period of five years.

Applications for extensions to scope in this reporting period have remained remarkably similar to the previous reporting period. Additions within scope have increased dramatically, which could be due to endorsement of new or revised Training Packages and their implementation by RTOs.

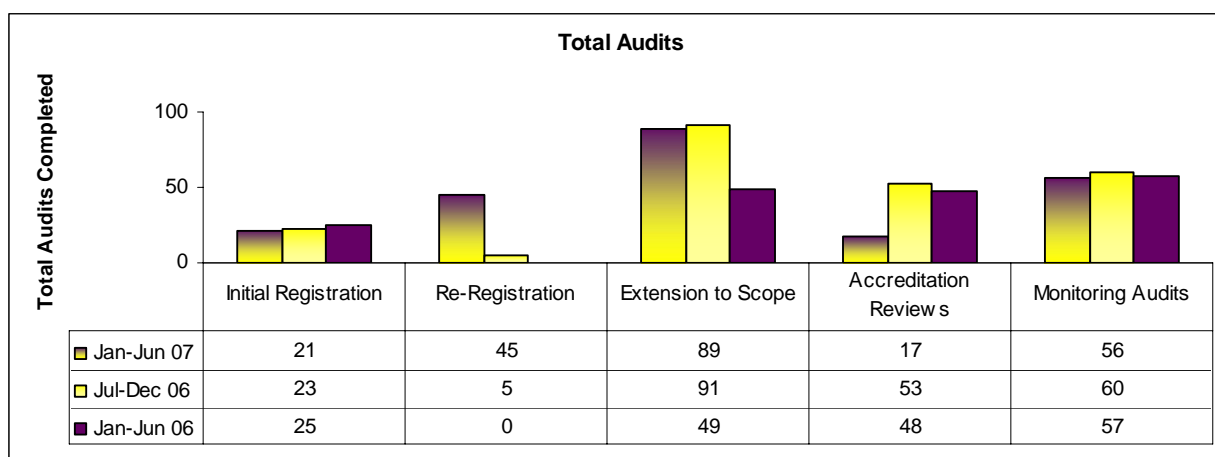
Between 1 January and 30 June 2007, one organisation had their application for initial registration rejected as they failed to demonstrate compliance with the AQTF, seven RTOs voluntarily relinquished registration and three RTOs were de-registered for failure to comply with the AQTF standards.

Audit Activity

The Council is required under the AQTF to undertake audits of RTOs against the AQTF standards. Some audits, such as initial registration, renewal of registration, extension to scope or review of an application for course accreditation, are initiated by the RTO. Other audits are initiated by the Council. These audits include the audit that must occur within twelve months of initial registration, strategic industry audits, audits on the basis of a risk identified at either the state or national level and audits authorised by the Council on the basis of a complaint.

To ensure the professionalism and consistency of auditors, a number of moderation workshops are conducted with the RTO auditors during the year both at state and national forums. Two moderation sessions were conducted during the reporting period. It is mandatory for auditors to attend these sessions, which provide professional development, discussion of any issues that may have arisen and case studies to maximise consistency of outcomes.

The graph below indicates that 228 audits were undertaken during the reporting period.



Audits initiated by the Training Accreditation Council

At the commencement of each year, the Council endorses an audit strategy outlining the audits to be undertaken during the year. Where possible, audits are integrated to minimise disruption to the RTO and to make effective use of resources.

The 2007 audit strategy, endorsed by the Council at the October 2006 meeting, includes the following audits:

- all client initiated audits;
- follow-up audits;
- audits within 12 months of initial registration;
- contracted providers (RTOs in receipt of public funds for contracted training);
- RTOs not site audited in the past 3 years;
- strategic audits – delivery of apprenticeships and traineeships (based on the recommendations from the Skills Formation Taskforce);
- complaints audits.

Management of Complaints

From 1 January 2007 to 30 June 2007 eighteen complaints against RTOs were lodged with the Training Accreditation Council. Of the eighteen complaints received by the Council, two were from interstate complainants against WA RTOs and two complaints were made by WA complainants against interstate RTOs. There were four complaints where the complainant state was not provided. The remaining complaints were from WA complainants against WA RTOs.

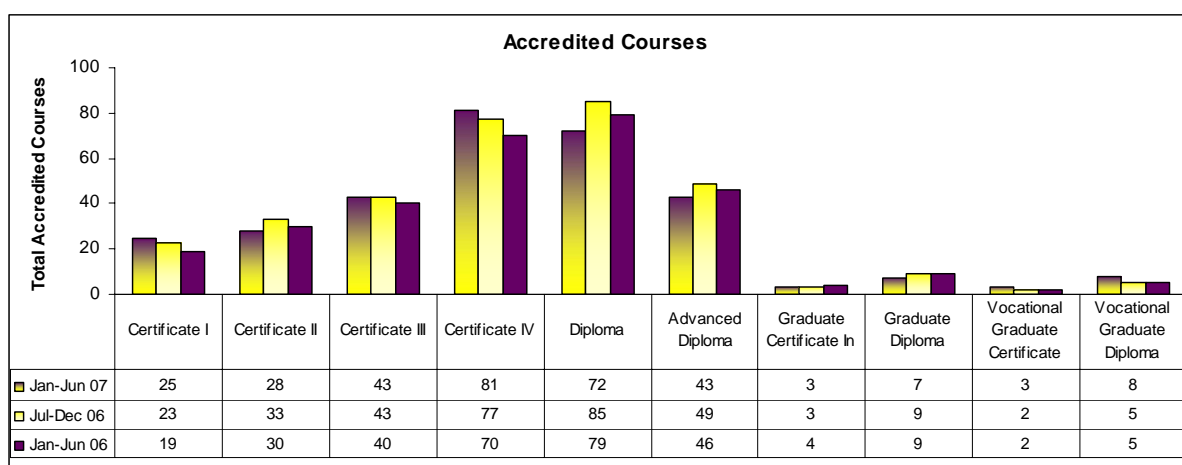
No complaints were received against the Training Accreditation Council during the reporting period.

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 twenty-eight courses were approved by the Council for accreditation and fifty were approved for re-accreditation. The Council also extended the accreditation of thirty courses.

The graph below shows the total accredited courses by Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) level for the current and last two reporting periods.

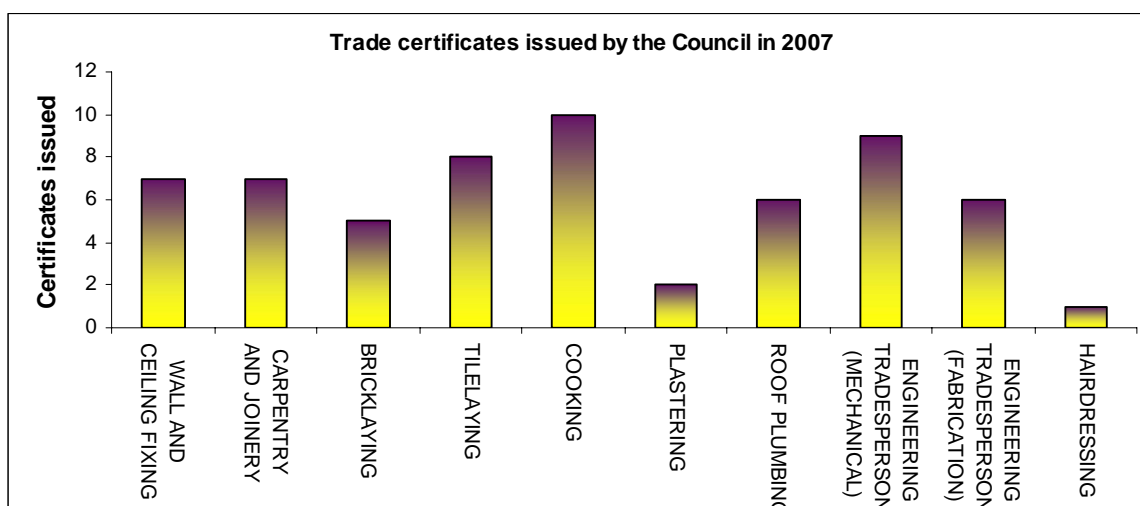


Skills recognition

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. As at 30 June 2007, six Industry Training Councils and two Registered Training Organisations had been approved by the Council to offer trade skills recognition as agents of the Council.

From January to June 2007 the Council issued sixty-one trade certificates. The following graph shows the distribution across trades:

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This is a significant increase over the corresponding period in 2006 when twenty-two trade certificates were issued. The increase reflects the focus on skills shortages and the importance of recognising skills that people have achieved other than through an indentured apprenticeship as a strategy to address skills shortages.

Sector Development

The Council is committed to assisting RTOs to understand and comply with the AQTF. Accordingly, information sessions and workshops are conducted to assist RTO staff understand their obligations and responsibilities and the requirements of the AQTF.

The information sessions are provided by staff from the Council's secretariat on a one-to-one basis and cover the National Skills Framework, rights and responsibilities of RTOs, alternatives to registration, the application, registration and audit process, course accreditation (where appropriate) and 'where to from here'.

Workshop topics included 'Registration', which provided in depth information on the registration process as well as group exercises to improve participant understanding of the AQTF standards. The Council has also developed a workshop on the audit process, titled 'Help the Auditor is coming'. Participants are provided with in depth information on the audit process, as well as practical information on preparing for an audit.

The following table shows the sector development provided by the Council, by number attending:

Workshop Title	No. Of Attendees
One-on-one Information Sessions	51
Registration Workshops	35
'Help ... the Auditor is coming'	20
Total	106

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AQTF 2007

At its meeting on 17 November 2006, the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) endorsed revised quality arrangements for the national VET sector to be known as AQTF 2007. In June 2007 MCVTE approved the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration* and AQTF 2007 *Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies* for publication and distribution.

The Training Accreditation Council has worked collaboratively with all State, Territory and Australian governments to develop these new arrangements and to ensure national consistency in application and monitoring of the Standards and outcomes based auditing.

During the reporting period, the Training Accreditation Council through the Department of Education Services assumed a lead role for a number of national projects to support the development and implementation of AQTF 2007. These included:

- development of an Audit Handbook including minimum audit team competencies and supporting audit resources
- development and facilitation of national auditor professional development and moderation workshops conducted April – May 2007
- development of national RTO professional development workshops.

To promote transparent, nationally consistent and streamlined interpretation and implementation of the new quality arrangements including an outcomes focused audit model, the Council contributed to the development of the following suite of national guidelines to be used by the registering bodies:

- **AQTF 2007 National Guideline for Industry Regulator Engagement**

This Guideline has been developed to establish how regulators and registering bodies can collaborate in quality assurance arrangements for training and assessment in VET.

The Training Accreditation Council has been engaging with key regulatory bodies to ensure that the quality assurance arrangements for VET lead to streamlined regulation, by building the confidence of industry regulators that the training and assessment practices of RTOs adequately address their regulatory requirements.

Consultation on the Guidelines is being undertaken by the Department of Education Services with key regulatory bodies in WA including WorkSafe; Office of Energy; Commercial Agents Squad; Maritime Safety Authority; and the Plumbers Registration Board.

- **AQTF 2007 National Guideline for Risk Management**

This guideline describes the nationally consistent risk-management approach to be used by all state and territory registering bodies in determining arrangements for the assessment of all registration applications, including applications for initial registration, renewal of registration and extensions to scope of registration.

The Training Accreditation Council has been working to ensure that when assessing the risk of an RTO at a given point in time, it will take into account all the relevant information about a training organisation's current performance and operating context.

- **AQTF 2007 Audit Handbook**

The Training Accreditation Council through the Department of Education Services took a lead role in the development and implementation of this national guideline including audit resources to assist auditors in the transition to outcomes-focused auditing against the AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration. It guides registering bodies and auditors

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in the planning, conduct and reporting of audits of RTOs when they occur. It incorporates the following documents:

To support the implementation of AQTF 2007 and the professional development of the VET sector in WA, the Training Accreditation Council conducted information sessions in March 2007. Three hundred and twenty nine representatives from registered training organisations and other VET stakeholders attended these sessions.

During May and June, as part of the national implementation and transition strategy for AQTF 2007, the Training Accreditation Council conducted a series of professional development workshops for registered training organisations across the state. As at 30 June 2007, 565 RTO representatives attended twenty-six workshops. Of these workshops thirteen were conducted in regional and remote locations across the state.

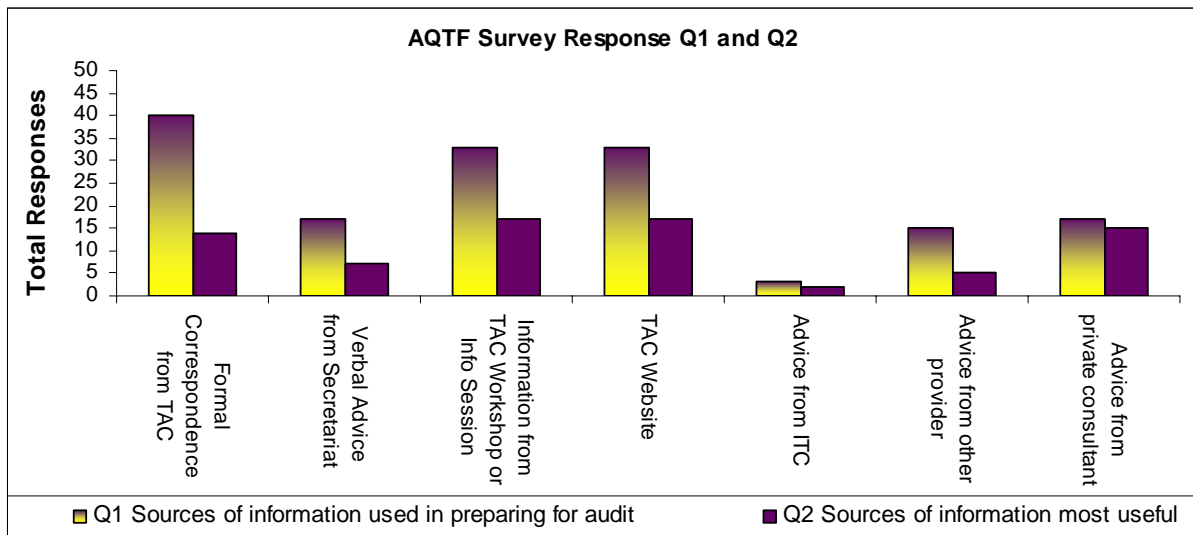
As well as support for registered training organisations and other stakeholders, the Training Accreditation Council has also provided support and professional development specific to AQTF 2007 for its auditors. During April - May national professional development workshops were held in Adelaide, Brisbane and Sydney. All auditors attended workshops which provided auditor briefings, moderation activities and the opportunity to network and develop agreed treatments for the AQTF 2007 audit approach.

Results of client 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 auditors. The surveys are used to inform continuous improvement in the provision of services to the Council's clients.

Only results from questions that did not require a written response are included in this report and displayed in the following graphs in this section. Responses requiring written comments are analysed by the secretariat and incorporated into the Council's continuous improvement cycle and in the performance management of auditors.

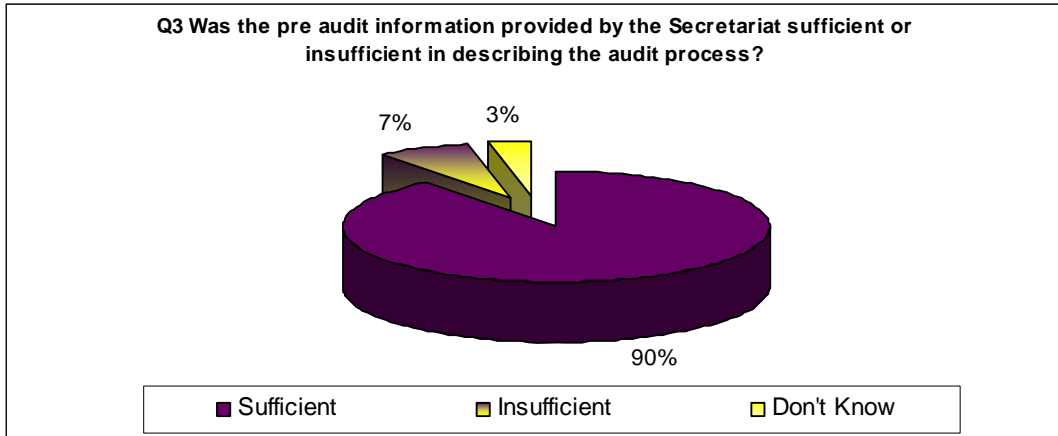
The first graph relates to the first two questions on the survey: "What sources of information did you use in preparing for the audit"; and "Of all the sources of pre-audit information, which did you find the most useful and why?"



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The graph indicates that a wide range of sources of information are accessed by clients, with the most useful information being provided through workshops and information sessions delivered on behalf of the Council, as well as the Council's website. Clients have also found advice from private consultants to be useful.

The following graph indicates responses to the third question on the survey: 'Was the pre-audit information provided by the secretariat sufficient or insufficient in describing the audit process?'

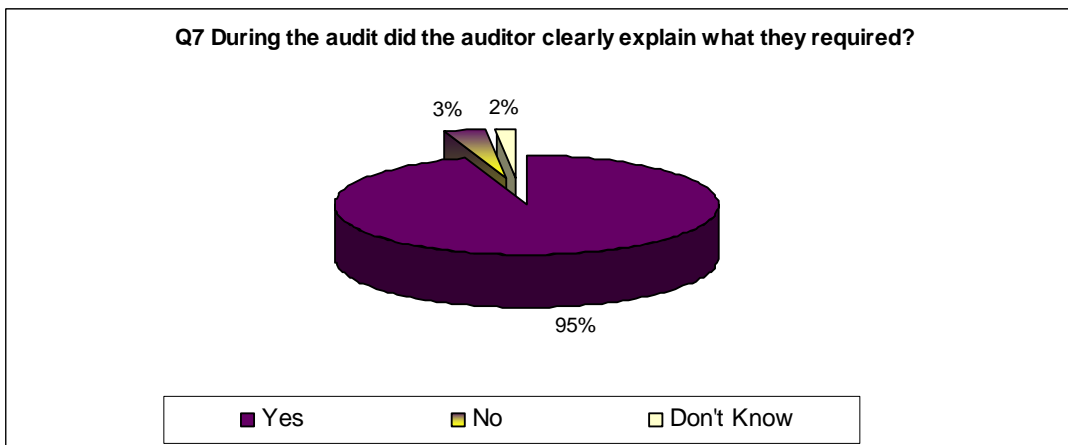


It is pleasing to note that 90% of respondents found that the information provided in describing the audit process was sufficient. Although this is a good result, it is lower than for the same period in 2006. The information provided to clients will be reviewed and updated to reflect implementation of AQTF 2007 and outcomes-based audit approaches and to improve clarity and client-focus.

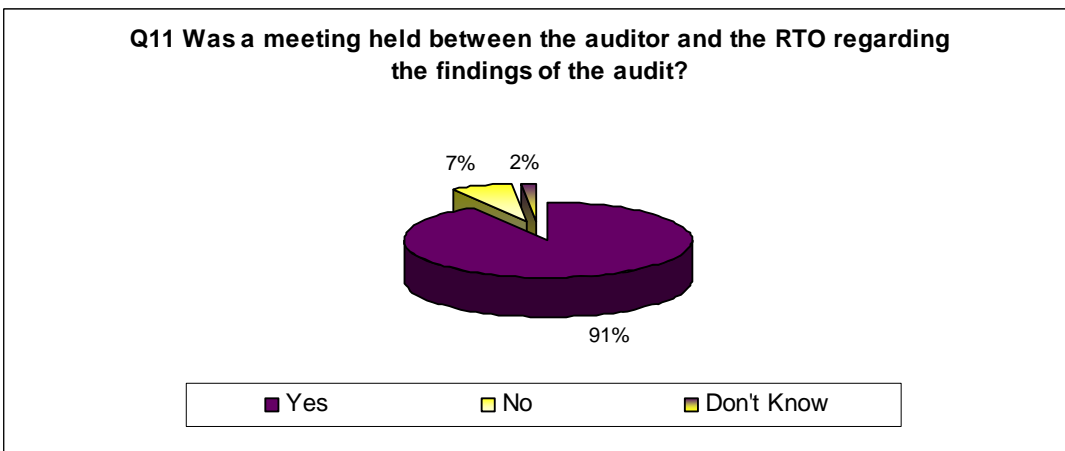
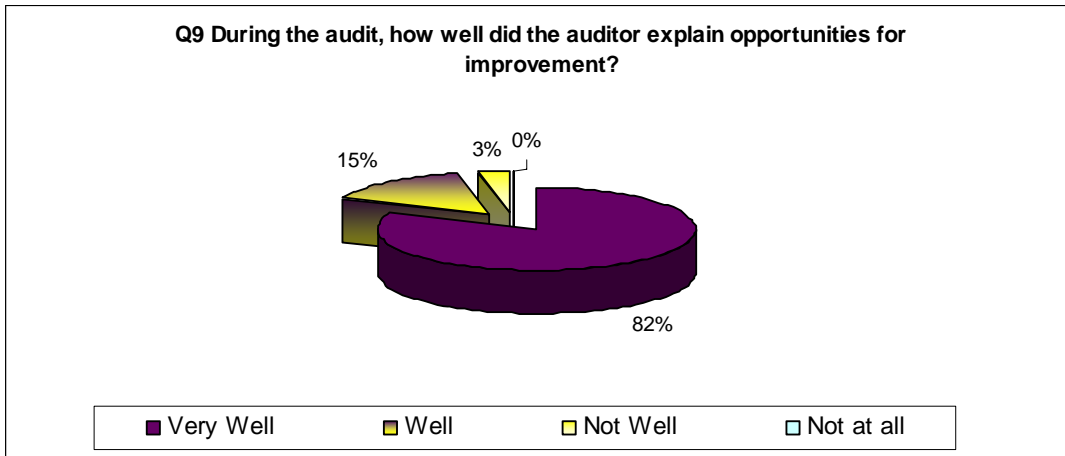
The post audit survey also asks a number of questions about the RTO's experience of the auditors' conduct throughout the audit process. For this reporting period, the Council is pleased to report a one hundred per cent "Yes" response to the following two questions:.

- Q5 – Did the Auditor clearly explain the audit process during the entry interview?
- Q6 – During the audit was the auditor courteous?

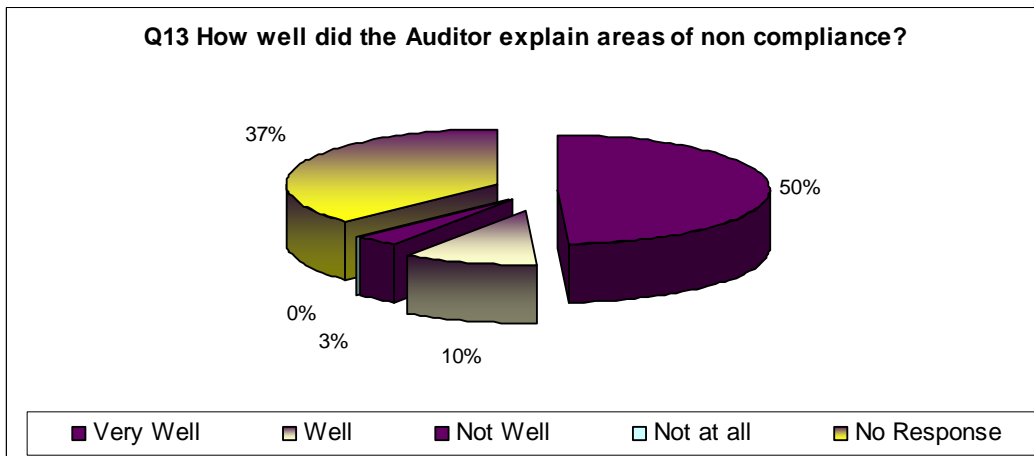
The Council and the secretariat have undertaken a great deal of work to ensure that audits are conducted professionally and transparently. The following graphs demonstrate the level of client satisfaction with the auditors:



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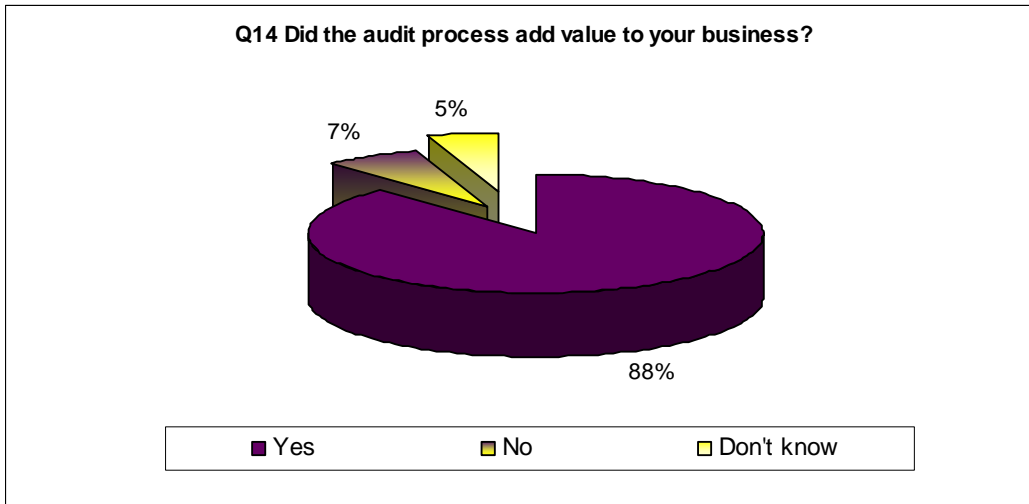
The “No” and “Don’t Know” responses to questions 7, 9 and 11 may indicate that the person completing the questionnaire was not an active participant in the audit.



Sixty per cent of respondents stated that the auditor explained areas of non compliance either very well or well. The high percentage of ‘No response’ could be the result of audits where no non-compliances were identified.

All of these results will be discussed with auditors during performance management interviews, which are held every six months.

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The Council is pleased with the response to this question. The responses indicate that 88% of respondents found the audit process added value to their business.

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