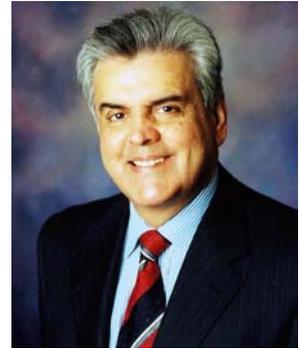




***Training Accreditation Council***  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2002-2003**

## LETTER OF COMPLIANCE



To the Hon Alan Carpenter MLA  
**MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

In accordance with Section 30 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*, I submit for your information and presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report of the Training Accreditation Council for the period commencing 1 July 2002 and ending 30 June 2003.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, stylized strokes that form the name 'Ian C Hill'.

Ian C Hill  
Chair  
Training Accreditation Council

30 September 2003

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## MEMBERSHIP

The Training Accreditation Council is comprised of seven members who are appointed by the Minister for Education and Training in accordance with the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*. They are selected on the basis of their expertise, qualifications and experience in accreditation, curriculum, training organisation registration or skills recognition.



**Prof Susan Holland**  
Edith Cowan University  
(Chair – July 02/June 03)



**Mr Geoff Hawke**  
West Coast College of TAFE



**Dr Irene Ioannakis**  
General Manager  
Caterpillar Institute



**David Wood**  
Seven Oaks Senior College  
May 03 –



**Mr Rees Barrett**  
July 02 – Feb 03



**Mr Michael Keep**  
Alcoa World Alumina Australia



**Ms Lorraine Carter**  
Woolworths (WA) Pty Ltd



**Ms Michelle Gianatti**  
Community and Public Sector  
Union

## VISION STATEMENT

The Training Accreditation Council is committed to:

- being the national leader for recognition policies, processes, services and standards in the vocational education and training sector; and
- providing practical, efficient and responsive support to government, industry, training organisations and the community.

## CHAIR'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the 2002/2003 Annual Report for the Training Accreditation Council (the 'Council').

Appointed as Chair on 1 August 2003, my involvement in preparation of the 2002/2003 Annual Report has provided a great opportunity to review the substantial achievements of the Council in the twelve months to 30 June 2003.

The Premier the Hon. Geoff Gallop announced that the 3 January 2003 that the Department of Education and the Department of Training would be combined into one Department under a single Minister, the Hon Alan Carpenter MLA . In addition, the Government also announced its intention to amalgamate the Department of Education Services and the Curriculum Council into this Department. As part of the structural arrangements to support these changes, an independent secretariat has been provided to the Council – with the secretariat now co-located with the Department of Education Services and the Curriculum Council. The new arrangements will provide an opportunity for closer relationships and more streamlined administration, resulting in a more client focused approach and improved service for stakeholders.

The Council in addition to undertaking its functions under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*, the Council also undertook a significant amount of work in implementation of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards for Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies and assisting Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) with the implementation of the AQTF.

The Council also undertook extensive consultations with key stakeholders during 2002/2003. The consultations were undertaken as part of the Council's strategic focus to raise stakeholders awareness of the Council's priorities with respect to quality assurance and recognition of VET in Western Australia. Stakeholders consulted included Industry Training Council's, RTOs and TAFE College Managing Directors.

During this period RTOs were audited to ensure ongoing compliance with the AQTF as part of the Integrated Audit Strategy. During 2002/2003 a Strategic Industry Audit of Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training was undertaken. The outcomes of this audit have informed the development of the new Training and Assessment Training Package. The outcomes will also inform the development by the Department of Education and Training of

targeted professional development programs. A Strategic Industry Audit of the existing worker traineeship in the Transport and Distribution industry has commenced and will be completed by the end of 2003. The Strategic audits of these areas were undertaken with the cooperation of the Training arm of the Department of Education and Training, Finance, Property and Business Services Industry Training Council (ITC) and the Transport and Storage ITC.

Implementation of the arrangements for VET in schools under the Joint Ministerial Policy Statement continued during 2002/2003 with a total of twenty schools being registered as at the end of June 2003. Under these arrangements, schools could become registered with the Council as Training Providers, with quality assurance to be provided by the Curriculum Council. Dialogue also continued with the Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Body regarding the provision of Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas within the VET sector.

The Council welcomed the opportunity to make a submission to the Ministerial Review of the Interface between Education and Training conducted in August 2002.

The Council would like to acknowledge the incredible commitment that Western Australian RTOs have made to meeting the requirements of the AQTF and ensuring that the quality of the Western Australian training system remains at the highest level.

On the 1 May 2003, the Minister for Education and Training appointed Mr David Wood to fill the vacant member position and I was appointed as the Chair on the 1 August 2003.

The Council would like to acknowledge and thank former Chair Prof Susan Holland, who resigned from the Council due to her relocation interstate, and outgoing member, Mr Rees Barrett, for their valued contribution.

The Council would also like to acknowledge the excellent support services provided by officers from the Office of the Training Accreditation Council and the ongoing assistance provided the Department of Education and Training, specifically the VET Teaching and Learning Branch.

The Council looks forward to building on the excellent work that has been undertaken over recent years in assuring that the quality of vocational education and training in Western Australia continues to be provided at the highest standard.



Ian C Hill  
CHAIR

## FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council's functions are detailed in Part 4, Section 27 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*. They focus on quality assurance and recognition in respect to vocational education and training (VET) in Western Australia.

Under the Act, the functions of the Council are to:

- register and de-register training providers;
- accredit and vary and cancel the accreditation of courses and skills training programs and the qualifications gained from such courses and skills training programs training products;
- recognise skills and qualifications obtained by individuals in this State or elsewhere, in industry, the workplace or educational institutions; and
- determine the minimum competency to be provided by accredited courses and skills training programs.

The Council is also required to provide advice to the State Training Board on matters relating to the functions specified above.

The Council has an established complaint procedure to support its functions. Provision for appeals by complainants, against the Council's decision with regard to complaints, is available through the State Training Board under Section 31 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*.

The Council's strategic approach to its responsibilities is detailed in its Business Plan that is reviewed and rewritten annually.

During 2002/2003 the Council's strategic focus has been in the following areas:

- ensuring the Council has appropriate processes for managing its responsibilities under the VET Act and government legislation;
- ensuring the Council fulfils requirements under the National Training Framework/ MINCO Agreement with respect to the AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies;
- ensuring RTOs and prospective RTOs are aware of the AQTF registration requirements and their obligations;
- auditing the performance of RTOs in maintaining the AQTF Standards;
- encouraging RTOs to work towards training excellence; and
- ensuring stakeholders are aware of the Council's requirements and priorities.

To enable the Council to progress the strategies set out in the Business Plan, work undertaken and issues considered by the Council included:

- implementation of the AQTF Standards for RTOs and the AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies including: review of the Extension to Scope process; integration of audits and review and implementation of the De-registration Guidelines for RTOs;
- the Integrated Monitoring Strategy and Strategic Industry Audits;
- submission to the Review of the Interface between Education and Training;
- impact of the amalgamation of the Departments of Education and Training;
- continued dialogue with the Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Body in regard to the delivery of Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas in the VET sector;
- VET in Schools activities;
- consultation with stakeholders;
- audit of compliance with AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies;
- participation in AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies National Moderation;
- skills recognition processes for Industry Training Councils; and
- WA Supplementary Guidelines for Course Developers.

The infrastructure that is in place to support the Council's key activities and the provision of ready advice to clients and stakeholders includes an knowledge management system which provides comprehensive information relating to registrations, accreditation, skills recognition, the quality system and training packages. Information is also available to support client inquiries, correspondence and registration.

The Council has a standing agenda item at its monthly meetings for consideration of applications from organisations seeking registration, re-registration and RTOs seeking to increase their scope. The Council also holds monthly Executive Committee meetings, two weeks prior to its standard monthly meetings, to consider additional applications. This has resulted in a very quick turn around for applications that are submitted to the Council for consideration.

The Council formally met 18 times over the 12 months to 30 June 2003.

Council members also attend meetings and functions as representatives of the Council (outlined in Appendix III). In addition the Council and/or Chair of the Council has met with the Minister for Education and Training twice during the year to discuss current activities and raise issues of significance.

## HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2002/2003

### Implementation of the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)

Western Australia continues to implement the nationally agreed AQTF which is the quality assurance mechanism of the National Training Framework. The AQTF is comprised of two sets of quality standards:

- 1) twelve standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), and
- 2) twenty-eight standards for Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies.

The Council is responsible for undertaking audits of RTOs against the standards. An auditing strategy, including identified risks and audit methodology, is developed annually and endorsed by the Council. The strategy incorporates a planned approach so that audits can be integrated to minimise disruption to the RTO. Wherever possible, audits for compliance with the AQTF are also integrated with audits for compliance with the Department's Delivery and Performance Agreement held with private RTOs in receipt of public funds.

The audits are undertaken by a panel of external auditors selected through a rigorous Request for Tender process. Professional development is provided to the auditors in the form of Auditors' Forums which are conducted on a quarterly basis. At the forums, auditors are presented with the latest information on the national VET system and are provided with updates on relevant policies and processes at both the State and national level. The forums also focus on moderation so that consistency in outcomes of audits is maximised.

Data are collated on the outcomes of the audits. This data provides information on which of the AQTF standards RTOs appear to be experiencing difficulty with in demonstrating compliance. This information is provided to the VET Teaching and Learning Directorate within the Training arm of the Department of Education and Training. The information informs the development of targeted professional development programs to address the identified areas of difficulty for RTOs.

In addition, the Council, as the Western Australian Registering/Course Accrediting Body, must demonstrate compliance against the twenty-eight AQTF standards for Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies through an annual audit undertaken by an independent auditor.

The State Training and Recognition System (STARS) database continues to support implementation of the AQTF. The database captures the history and current registration of RTOs, which RTOs can access through *RTONet*. This is a direct link to systems within the Department of Education and Training through which RTOs can access information on their registration with the Council, apprenticeship and traineeship information and funding and contracts related to vocational education and training. *RTONet* has proved to be a successful resource for RTOs in monitoring their registration activities with the Council.

Information sessions and full day registration workshops are conducted on a regular basis. These are designed to assist training organisations seeking initial registration or renewal of registration with the Council. Information is provided on the registration process, the AQTF standards and the type of evidence that may be required to demonstrate compliance with the standards. Information to support implementation of the AQTF is also provided on the Council's website, which is regularly updated.

AQTF Standard 1.4 requires RTOs to conduct an internal audit for compliance with the AQTF standards at least annually. Regular workshops are offered to assist RTOs to comply with this standard.

The Council has worked closely and collaboratively with the Curriculum Council to provide support and assistance to those schools registered with the Council as Training Providers and scheduled for a full AQTF audit. Seminars have been conducted with teachers and work has been undertaken to assist Government schools to identify where evidence to demonstrate compliance with the AQTF standards might be found within the education system. Work has also been undertaken to provide a background paper to auditors on the Joint Ministerial Policy Statement and the roles of the Training Accreditation Council and the Curriculum Council in its implementation, with particular reference to the AQTF standards.

The Council is committed to full implementation of the AQTF in this State, to maximise quality vocational education and training outcomes for participants in Western Australia.

## **Integration of Audits**

### **Integration of AQTF Audits**

Prior to the implementation of the AQTF, training organisations applying to the Council for registration were required to present evidence that training and administration processes in the organisation met the Council's requirements. This evidence was then validated by an independent assessment (known as 'Validation'). The ongoing quality of training and assessment was assured through a program of monitoring. As a part of the Council's educative and collaborative approach to the auditing of RTOs, the terms 'validation' and 'monitoring' were adopted to distinguish these different types of audits.

The focus of the AQTF on achieving and maintaining compliance with the AQTF standards for RTOs has more closely aligned the processes of validation and monitoring through the standardisation of the terms 'audit' and 'auditor'. These terms have now been adopted by Western Australia to provide greater consistency and clarity to Western Australian RTOs.

The Council, as the State Registering/Course Accrediting Body, is required to undertake the following audits of RTOs, in accordance with the AQTF standards for Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies:

- a) audit prior to initial registration with the Council;
- b) audit within twelve months of initial registration
- c) audits for targeted RTOs within the registration period, undertaken in response to identified risk factors or as part of a program of strategic industry audits, or in response to complaints; and
- d) audit prior to renewal of registration.

The Council has adopted a planned integrated approach to the implementation of AQTF audits so that audits affecting an individual RTO, for example b) and c) audits, can be integrated to minimise disruption to the RTO.

## **Integration of AQTF and Contractual Audits**

Wherever possible, audits undertaken on behalf of the Council for compliance with the AQTF are also integrated with audits for compliance with the Department's Delivery and Performance Agreement held with private RTOs in receipt of public funds. This is achieved through an integrated approach between the Council and the Department of Education and Training.

The integrated approach is overseen by a group of senior staff from within the Department and the Office of the Council. Members of the group are drawn from Training Resource Allocation, Apprenticeship and Traineeship Support Network, Aboriginal Services and the Office of the Training Accreditation Council.

The group endorses the list of RTOs to be audited, the standards and qualifications to be targeted, the information to be provided to RTOs and the process for reporting the outcomes.

Outcomes of the audits are reported to the Council and to the Department.

## **Strategic Industry Audits**

Risks to the vocational education and training system are identified at the State level through consultation with stakeholders and at the national level through the National Training Quality Council. Strategic Industry Audits are undertaken where a risk is identified within a specific industry area.

Two Strategic Industry Audits have been implemented, in cooperation with the Department of Education and Training, during this reporting period. These are a Strategic Industry Audit of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, which is a national audit and an audit of the existing worker traineeships within the Transport and Distribution industry, which is a State initiated Strategic Industry Audit.

### **Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training**

The introduction of the AQTF in January 2002 placed a new emphasis on the requirement for trainers and assessors to possess the competencies identified in the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (BSZ40198). Anecdotal evidence suggested that this resulted in a surge of practitioners delivering the qualification to meet the demand. There were suggestions that market pressures were driving the cost of the qualification down and, with it, the time participants spent acquiring the competencies, particularly in relation to workplace application of the skills. Concerns were raised about RTOs delivering the qualification to their own internal staff in order to meet the requirements of AQTF standard 7 without due regard to the need to manage the potential conflict of interest.

Similar concerns were evident across all of the Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies. A report by the National Assessors and Workplace Trainers noted 'numerous examples...of 'improbable' delivery strategies to achieve the Certificate IV, including a multitude of two-day, 'train the trainer' type programs. Other concerns were expressed about the practice of restructuring these units in other Training Packages, maintaining currency, inconsistent processes of Recognition of Current Competency (RCC), and questionable approaches to online delivery/assessment'.<sup>1</sup> Such concerns prompted a national audit of the qualification by

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<sup>1</sup> See NAWT *Review of the Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training*, Final Report, Stage 1, November 2001, pp.ii-iii

Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies. This proceeded in tandem with the development of a new Training Package (The Training and Assessment package) to replace the BSZ98 package.

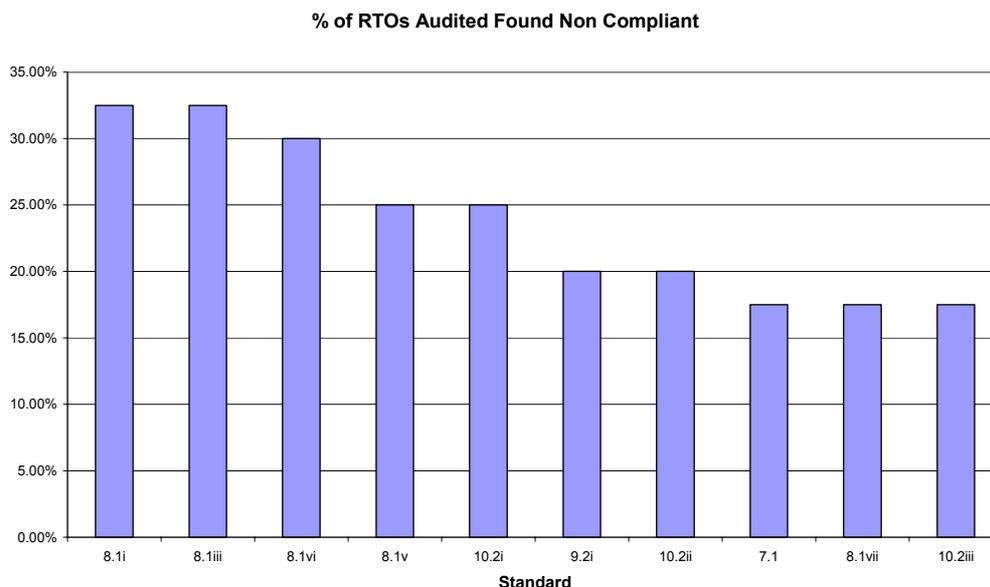
In response to the concerns raised at a State and national level about the training and assessment of Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (BSZ40198) the Western Australian Department of Education and Training, on behalf of the Council, embarked on a Strategic Industry Audit of the qualification in April 2002.

A total of 305 RTOs were identified as delivering the qualification in Western Australia.

A three stage audit methodology was developed to investigate delivery and assessment of the qualification comprising:

- Stage 1 - Preliminary survey;
- Stage 2 - Desktop audit of internal audit document and RPL documentation
- Stage 3 - On site audits.

The chart below indicates the most commonly occurring non compliances amongst the RTOs audited as at 30 June 2003:



The findings suggest that there are significant issues with the assessment of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training. The graph indicates that nearly one in every three RTOs audited was non compliant against Standards 8.1i and 8.1iii, i.e.

*'The RTO must ensure that assessments, regardless of whether through a training and assessment pathway or an assessment-only pathway comply with the Assessment Guidelines included in the applicable nationally endorsed Training Packages or the assessment requirements specified in accredited courses'. (8.1i)*

and

*'The RTO must ensure that assessments, regardless of whether through a training and assessment pathway or an assessment-only pathway comply with the principles of validity, reliability, fairness and flexibility.' (8.1iii)*

Findings from the Strategic Industry Audit have been provided to the developers of Training and Assessment Training Package to be released in 2003. They will also be provided to the VET Teaching and Learning Directorate within the Training arm of the Department of

Education and Training to inform the development of targeted professional development programs.

### **Transport and Distribution Existing Worker Traineeships**

In July 2002, the Transport and Distribution Industry Training Council requested that an AQTF audit be undertaken in the Transport and Distribution industry, focusing on the existing worker traineeships in this industry. The existing worker traineeships are linked to the Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing) and the Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport).

The Transport and Distribution Industry Training Council is responsible for the management of a project to provide traineeships to existing workers. The purpose of the project is to develop a training culture within this industry where no qualification pathway has previously existed. One of the risks identified in relation to this project was the small number of qualified trainers due to the lack of formal training that has been available in this industry in the past.

The Industry Training Council requested that the audit include surveys of trainees.

The request from the Industry Training Council to undertake this strategic audit was considered by the Department's Operational Working Group in July 2002 and subsequently endorsed by the Council. It was agreed that the focus of the audit would be AQTF standards 7, 8, 9 and 10 and that the audit would include a phone survey of selected trainees.

The Strategic Industry Audit of the existing worker traineeship within the Transport and Distribution industry is currently progressing.

### **Extension of Scope Process**

Council considered an amended process and fee structure for RTOs seeking to extend their scope of registration with the Council. The impetus for the review was the underpinning principles of equity, ease of administration and to minimise costs incurred by RTOs.

Prior to the review RTOs were required to address AQTF Standards 2, 7, 8 and 9 for each qualification or part thereof. Charges for processing applications for extension to scope were \$800 for one industry area and \$400 for each additional industry area. Site visit audits were required for all extension to scope applications and RTOs were also required to pay for travel and accommodation expenses incurred by the Auditor in undertaking the site visit audit.

Council considered the categories of extension to scope applications, from small changes to scope from similar or related industry or sub-industry areas to substantial change to scope to move to a new industry area, and assessed the risks factors associated with extension to scope applications within these categories.

Council adopted an amended process for extension to scope with a sliding-scale fee structure which is based on the category of audit and the risk factors identified through previous audits and through liaising with other government agencies and industry. For example, an application to add up to 3 units of competency from any Training Package would involve a desk-top audit and incur a process fee of \$200. An application to extend the RTO's scope into different industry areas, for example from Transport to Performing Arts, would

involve a site visit audit and incur a fee of \$800 for one industry area plus \$400 for additional industry areas. Travel and accommodation costs would be borne by the RTO.

The amended extension to scope process and fee structure took effect from January 2003.

## **De-registration Guidelines for RTOs**

Under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*, it is a function of the Council to register and de-register training organisations.

During the 2001/2002 reporting period, the Training Accreditation Council established guidelines covering the process to be undertaken when Council determined that grounds existed for an RTO to be de-registered. The process was included on the Council's website and provided information to RTOs on the procedure in relation to de-registration and appeals.

These guidelines were implemented and found to be of insufficient clarity and rigor, resulting in an appeal being upheld by the State Training Board against Council's decision to de-register an RTO.

Following the appeal, Council undertook a review of the de-registration guidelines. The review identified certain stages of the auditing and de-registration process that may be interpreted in a manner that was not consistent with the intent of the guidelines, or required updating to reflect the requirements of the AQTF standards.

New guidelines with greater clarity and rigor in the process and reflecting AQTF requirements were endorsed by the Council and these were approved by the Minister for Education and Training. The grounds for de-registration of an RTO may include:

- i) failure to comply with the AQTF standards or submit to auditing for that purpose;
- ii) where registration has been obtained by fraud;
- iii) if the owner of the RTO has been convicted of an offence that renders that person inappropriate to carry on the business of a training provider;
- iv) persons who manage or control the RTO are not fit and proper persons.

RTOs are provided with a variety of opportunities to address issues of non-compliance prior to the Council implementing the de-registration process.

The amended de-registration guidelines are currently being implemented with two RTOs.

## **Review of the Interface between Education and Training**

The Council provided a submission to the Ministerial Review of the Interface between Education and Training in WA (Tannock Review) in August 2002. The submission focused on the following three terms of reference:

- the clarification of the purpose of VET in Schools and the respective roles of each sector;
- quality assurance arrangements, including assessment and recognition; and
- articulation arrangements between sectors.

In response to the Review the Council recommended the Review Group consider a wide range of issues, examples included:

- recognising VET in Schools as contributing toward a broad education experience,
- reducing barriers to the provision of VET in schools through partnership arrangements with RTOs;
- developing broad based communication strategy to key stakeholders outlining the purpose of VET in schools;
- in the short term, the need for a substantial investment in professional development, including return to industry programs, for staff involved in providing VET in schools; and
- the need for further dialogue between all education and training sectors to maximise articulation arrangements.

The report on the Ministerial Review was tabled in Parliament in December 2002 and the Council provided a response to the Minister with respect to the Reports 'Draft Conclusions and Recommendations'.

The Council also noted that the issues raised in regard to the independence of the accreditation authorities from the sector they were associated with could be adequately managed. In addition, the Council indicated that it had commenced a review of its policies and processes to ensure issues of independence were adequately addressed.

The Council also highlighted that the conclusions from the Review did establish that the education and training sectors have distinctive roles, the requirements in regard to quality assurance and recognition are also distinctive between the sectors.

## **Amalgamation of the Departments of Education and Training**

On 3 January 2003 the Premier the Hon. Geoff Gallop announced that the Department of Education and the Department of Training would be combined into one Department under a single Minister. Following the required legislative changes, the Government intends to amalgamate the Department of Education Services and the Curriculum Council into this Department. The new Department will progress the Government's goals to provide a more efficient and cohesive system of lifelong learning opportunities for all Western Australians – with a particular emphasis on improving the participation and performance of 15-19 year olds in education or training.

As part of the structural arrangements to support these aims, an independent secretariat has been provided to the Council – with the secretariat now co-located with the Department of Education Services and the Curriculum Council.

The new administrative arrangements have provided the opportunity for closer relationships and more streamlined administration in the regulatory functions of all three educational sectors. This relationship has already resulted in a better understanding and cooperation between the Curriculum Council and the Council in relation to the delivery of vocational education and training in schools.

The reorganisation involved the staff of the secretariat and the administrative support in substantial planning and subsequent move over a period of six months.

## Vocational Education and Training in Schools

Vocational education and training in schools has continued to be delivered under the Joint Ministerial Policy Statement, which became effective from 1 January 2002. Under these arrangements, schools can become registered with the Training Accreditation Council as Training Providers, using the provisions of Section 6 of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996*. Quality assurance was to be provided by the Curriculum Council.

In 2001, the Training Accreditation Council extended the registration of Training Provider schools to 31 December 2003. These schools were required to demonstrate compliance with the AQTF standards by 30 June 2003. In accordance with the requirements of the Joint Ministerial Policy Statement requiring that quality assurance be provided by the Curriculum Council, desk top audits of all Training Provider schools were undertaken by the Curriculum Council against the AQTF standards and a report on the outcomes of the audits was considered by the Council. A risk management strategy for ongoing compliance by Training Provider schools with the AQTF standards was prepared by the Curriculum Council and presented to the Training Accreditation Council. All Training Provider schools will have undergone a full, on-site audit against all AQTF standards by 31 December 2003.

By the end of June 2003, twenty schools were registered with the Training Accreditation Council as Training Providers under the Joint Ministerial Policy Statement. Of these, nineteen were Government schools and one independent school.

The Joint Ministerial Policy Statement also makes provision for some schools, such as agricultural colleges, to become RTOs. Another agricultural college was registered as a Training Organisation, bringing to six the number of agricultural colleges registered with the Training Accreditation Council as Training Organisations.

The Council and the Curriculum Council continue to work closely to implement both the Joint Ministerial Policy Statement and the AQTF for the delivery of vocational education and training within the school sector.

## Consultation with Stakeholders

During 2003/2003, the Training Accreditation Council undertook consultations with key stakeholders. The consultations were undertaken as part of the Council's strategic focus to ensure stakeholders were aware of the Council's requirements and priorities with respect to the quality assurance and recognition of VET in Western Australia.

The Council actively consulted with a range of stakeholders including Industry Training Council's, RTOs and TAFE College Managing Directors.

In particular, the Council met with Industry Training Council's to discuss a wide range of issues, including:

- licensing and regulatory arrangements with other bodies;
- development, implementation and review of Training Packages (including courses partially covered by Training Packages);
- contribution of industry into the registration and course accreditation process;
- cost of the AQTF to RTOs;
- development of an ongoing working relationship; and
- revision of the Auditors' Tool Kit.

In addition, the Council also met with the TAFE College Managing Directors in May 2003 to discuss Council's current priorities and provide an overview of the progress on the implementation of the AQTF. The meeting also provided an opportunity for TAFE Colleges to express their views on issues relating to the Council's functions and the AQTF.

### **Audit of compliance with the AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies**

The *Australian Quality Training Framework Standards for Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies* (2001) provides state and territory registering /course accrediting bodies with standards that must be followed for:

- evaluation of training organisations to ensure that they meet and continue to meet, the standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies;
- registration of training organisations;
- accreditation of courses;
- mutual recognition.

In June 2000, national and State/Territory Ministers responsible for vocational education and training agreed that, as part of the National Training Quality Council's role in providing advice to the ANTA Board on quality assurance arrangements in the national vocational education and training system, Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies be required to:

*"..... arrange for the provision of independent advice to the NTQC on State/Territory registration, audit and related processes to assist the Council in its role of providing advice to the ANTA Board and hence ANTA MINCO on critical aspects of the operation of the AQTF".*

To provide this advice, an independent audit of the Council's processes for compliance with the standards (as provided by the Quality Assurance and Recognition Branch of the WA Department of Training) was undertaken in January 2003 by Andrea Bateman of the University of Ballarat. The audit consisted of a review of documentation, interviews with staff and a subsequent desktop audit of the response to audit recommendations.

The audit report found no major non-compliances with the Standards.

### **AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies National Moderation**

The Council as the State Recognition Authority participated in National Auditor Moderation meetings in November 2002 and June 2003. The meetings are coordinated by the Australian National Training Authority and are held twice yearly, with external consultants appointed to facilitate.

The moderation meetings bring auditors and staff involved with the registration of training organisations together to moderate the national standards, focusing on the need for national consistency in the interpretation of the AQTF standards across all states and territories.

## Skills Recognition processes for Industry Training Councils

The Council has an endorsed process for Industry Training Councils (ITCs) to offer skills recognition services (assessment only) in certain trades areas.

Each ITC is required to submit an application to offer skills recognition services to the Council for approval prior to the ITC providing that service. Following endorsement of the application, the ITC can proceed with skills assessments for trade qualification purposes. The Council awards all certification for skills assessments carried out by ITCs.

Up to June 2003 six ITCs had been endorsed by the Council to offer skills recognition services. These are:

- Hospitality and Tourism ITC;
- Building and Construction ITC;
- Metals Manufacturing and Services ITC; and
- Light Manufacturing ITC;
- Wholesale Retail and Personal Services ITC;
- Western Australian Food and Beverage ITC.

The Metals Manufacturing and Services ITC has advised the Council that it will no longer be offering this service.

A review of the requirements for endorsement by the Council has been undertaken to more closely align it with AQTF requirements. ITCs are currently in the process of addressing the reviewed requirements, and will be required to submit their updated processes to the Council for approval.

## WA Supplementary Guidelines for Course Developers

In July 2002 the Australian National Training Authority published, as part of the AQTF, a document entitled *Guidelines for Course Developers* which is a guide to developing VET course for accreditation under the AQTF. Once the Council has accredited a course the course is placed on the National Training Information Service and all RTOs in Australia are required to recognise the course. As a consequence, it is imperative that all accredited courses meet strict guidelines. The development of supplementary guidelines for Western Australian course developers was necessary to ensure that there was a consistent approach and interpretation of the Guidelines by local course developers.

The supplementary guidelines provide a brief summary and specific detail on the interpretation of the *Guidelines for Course Developers* for Western Australia. The supplement specifies the Council as the relevant accrediting body for Western Australia. The supplement also makes clear that the use of units of competence is essential if the proposed course leads to occupational outcomes and that Training Package units of competence may be contextualised and customised and must be used wherever possible.

The other areas covered by the supplement include information on the research which must be conducted prior to development, protocols in relation to packaging, titles and codes and information on accredited courses leading only to a Statement of Attainment. The Council believes that these guidelines have provided course developers with increased confidence in the interpretation of the *Guidelines for Course Developers* in Western Australia.

## Marketing/Publications

The Council actively undertakes marketing/promotion including the development of support materials to promote and ensure the quality of vocational education and training (VET) in Western Australia. It is important that clients and stakeholders are fully aware of quality assurance and recognition arrangements.

A range of marketing activities was undertaken during the year. These included:

- **Publication of a Council newsletter**  
The Council has produced two *TAC Update* newsletters in the past 12 months. The newsletter provides relevant, up-to-date information and advice on all aspects of the vocational education and training system related to the Council's functions. The newsletters are distributed widely to all stakeholders/clients of the system.
- **Professional development forums provided to auditors**  
The Office of the Council and the Department of Education and Training on behalf of the Council have undertaken moderation forums for auditors to promote the quality and consistency of audits. During 2002/2003 four general moderation forums were conducted.
- **Certification/Qualification Guide**  
In response to the large proportion of complaints received in relation to certification issues, the Council has developed a guide that provides detailed guidance to RTOs on Certification.
- **Student Guide to Training**  
In conjunction with the Department of Education and Training, a 'consumer guide' to training has been produced that outlines key questions that a consumer should ask before purchasing training to ensure that the training they are considering meets their needs.
- **Council website**  
The Council website was launched in July 2001. The website provides current information to customers on the Council's products and services, including information for new and existing RTOs. During the 2002/2003 financial year the Website attracted over 36,000 visitors.
- **Representation on Committees**  
The Council participates in various committees relevant to its functions, including the Curriculum Council's Vocational Education and Training in Schools Committee and the Post Compulsory Education Committee.
- **Participation in the Training Excellence Awards**  
Each year, Council members either Chair or participate on judging panels for the Training Excellence Awards.
- **Participation in Training Forums**  
The Council provided an information stand and members attended both of the outstanding training forums conducted by the Department of Education and Training in 2002/2003:  
*Teens Teachers and Training* Forum November 2002; and  
*Delivering the goods through good delivery* held in May 2003.

# SERVICES TO CLIENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

## Services to Clients

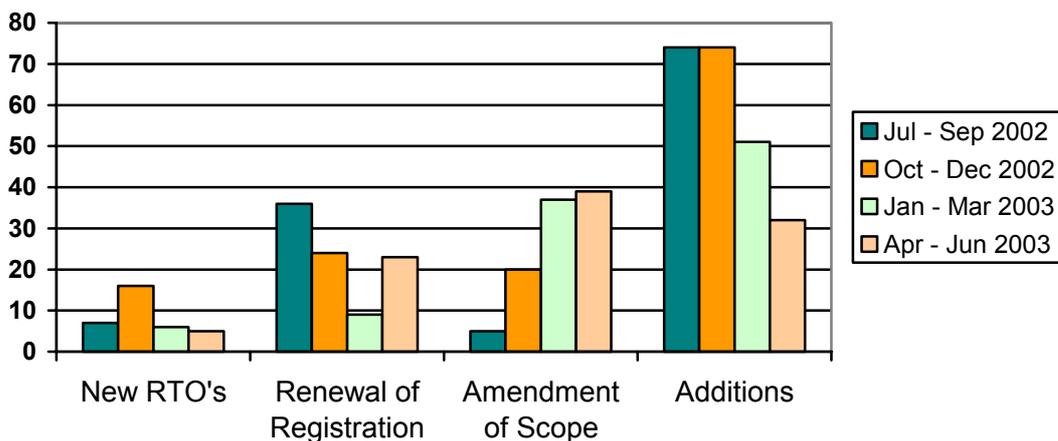
### Registration of Training Organisations

There are 1069 RTOs currently registered to deliver training in Western Australia. A total of 484 RTOs are registered with the Council and a further 585 RTOs are registered to deliver in Western Australia under mutual recognition arrangements. There has been a slight decline in the number of RTOs registered with the Council. However, the number of RTOs delivering in this State under mutual recognition has increased over the last twelve months. This is due to the Office of the Council implementing a new process to download details of Interstate RTO's delivery in Western Australia. The new process has improved the accuracy of the notifications provided by other States, resulting in the increased recorded number of RTOs delivering under Mutual Recognition in this State.

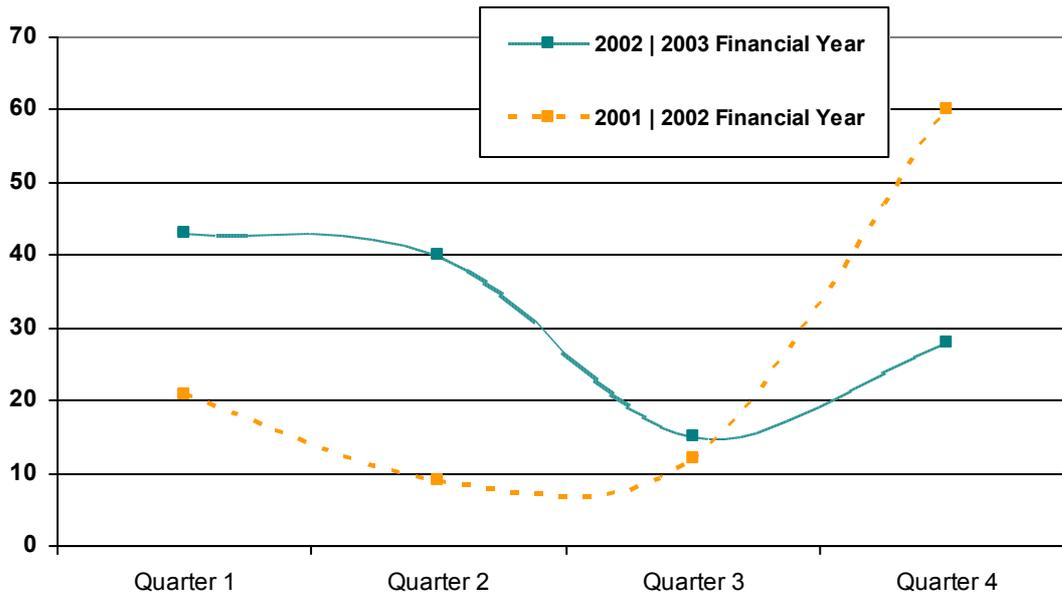
During the 2002/2003 year, Council has considered the following applications from training organisations:

- 34 registrations with scope (new);
- 92 re-registrations;
- 101 amendments to scope; and
- 231 notifications received from RTOs adding courses/qualifications to their current scope.

### Registered Training Organisations

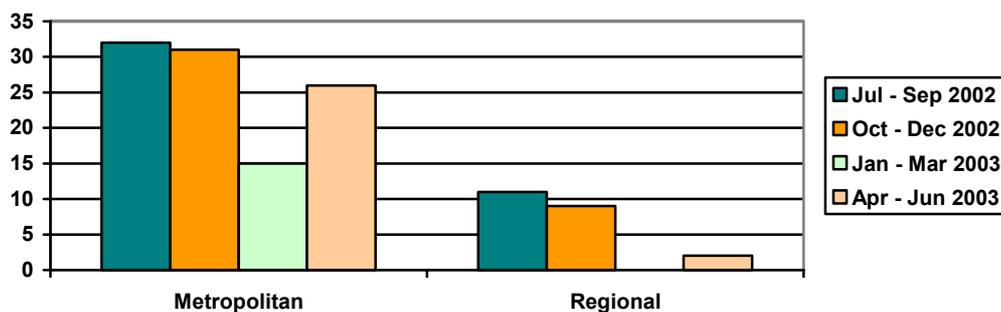


### Registration Comparison



The table above indicates the number of applications per quarter considered by the Council during 2002/2003 and provides a comparison with the previous year. Registration activity has increased by almost 25% during the 2002/2003 financial year. The increased activity can be directly attributed to the Council's decision to review the expiry dates of RTOs. Council agreed to stagger the dates of RTO expiry in order to reduce the traditionally heavy workload occurring in December of each year.

### Registration Delivery Areas



Of the 126 new RTOs and renewal of registration providers registered during the 2002/2003 financial year, 104 were based in the metropolitan area and 22 were from regional areas.

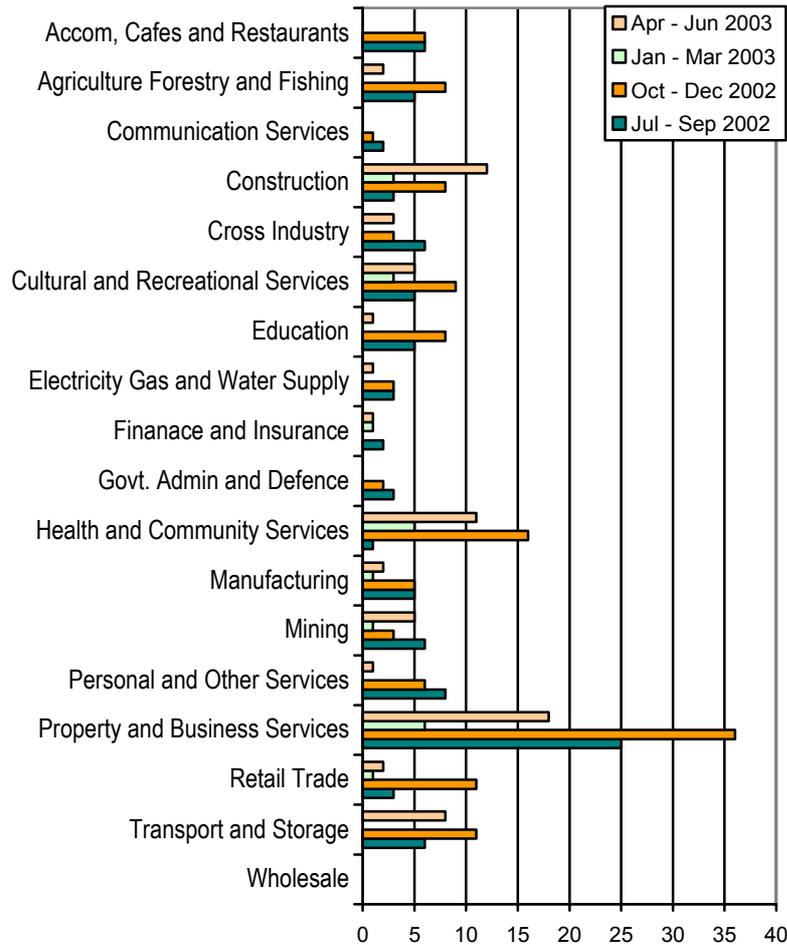
### Industry Areas of Scope Validation

The table below demonstrates the level of scope of validation within each industry area.

The range of industry areas added to an RTO's scope during the 2002/2003 financial year was consistent with the previous financial year. However, the Property and Business Services industry area with 85 additions to scope was the leading industry area.

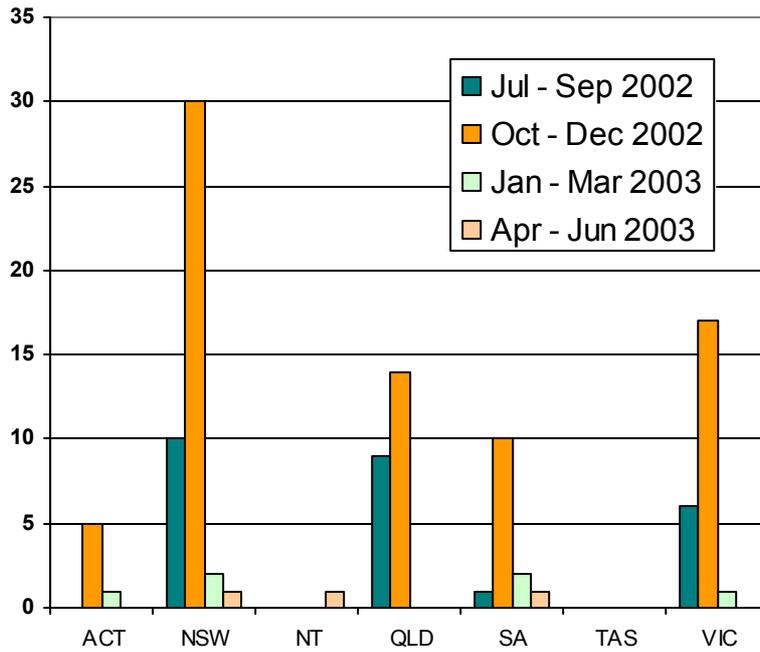
The leading industry areas in order of highest level of scope are:

- Property and Business Services (85);
- Health and Community Services (33);
- Construction (26); and
- Transport and Storage (25).



## Mutual Recognition

The number of RTOs from other States registered to deliver training in Western Australia under the Mutual Recognition Protocols increased in 2002/2003 to 585. This is due to the Office of the Training Accreditation Council implementing a new process which has improved the accuracy of the notifications provided by other States, resulting in the increased recorded number of RTOs delivering under Mutual Recognition in Western Australia.

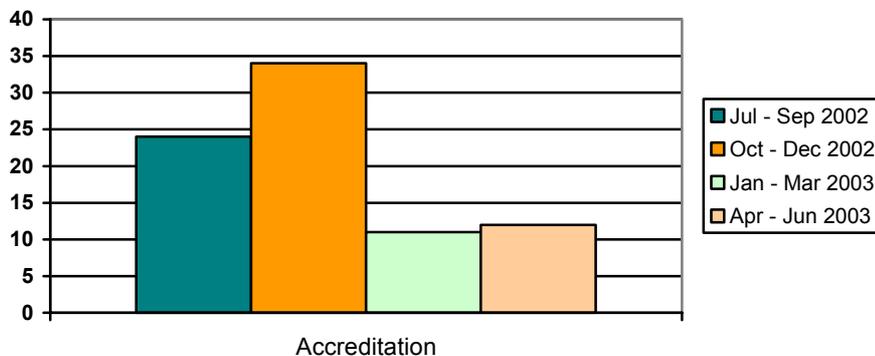


## Course Accreditation

During 2002/2003 the Council approved a total of 81 courses for accreditation. Ten courses were rejected by the Council as they duplicated a Training Package qualification or unit of competence.

As Training Packages are endorsed and the Western Australian Implementation Kits developed to enable implementation of, and transition to, qualifications from the Training Packages, accreditation of courses will diminish.

Where it was anticipated that a Training Package would be endorsed within 6-12 months, courses were accredited for a period of one year only.



## Skills Recognition – Trade Areas

From July 2002 to June 2003 there were 31 trade certificates approved for issuance by the Council to individuals assessed as competent in a range of trade areas via the ITC Skills Recognition Process.

The following table provides a breakdown of the Trade Certificates issued by the Council:

Trade Areas	Jul-Sep 2002	Oct-Dec 2002	Jan-Mar 2003	Apr-Jun 2003
Baking/Breadmaking/Pastry	1	0	0	0
Butchering	1	0	0	0
Fabricator Welder	1	0	0	0
Cooking	5	0	1	5
Engineering Tradesperson	0	0	0	2
Floor Covering	1	0	0	0
Jewellery	3	0	0	0
Mechanical Fitter	0	0	2	1
Metal Construction	0	0	2	0
Painting Decorating	0	2	0	0
Wall and Floor Tiling	2	0	0	0
Wall and Ceiling Fixing	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>

The continuing demand for Trade Certificates is likely to be a reflection of the success of an extensive skills recognition promotional campaign that was conducted during 2001/2002 and also the impact of the Council's decision to allow ITCs to conduct skills recognition services (assessment only) for trade qualifications.

The following ITCs have been approved to provide Skills Recognition assessment services for trade qualifications:

- Hospitality and Tourism ITC;
- Building and Construction ITC;
- Light Manufacturing ITC;
- Metals Manufacturing and Services ITC;
- Wholesale, Retail and Personal Services ITC; and
- Western Australian Food and Beverage ITC.

## Apprenticeships and Traineeships

As Training Packages are being endorsed or revised, traineeships are being linked to the appropriate qualifications to meet the needs of Western Australian industry. Traineeships are developed by the Department of Education and Training under the Industrial Training Act prior to being entered by the Council onto the State Training and Recognition System. From July 2002 to June 2003 forty five (45) traineeships were established.

<b>Traineeships</b>	Jul - Sep 2002	Oct - Dec 2002	Jan - Mar 2003	Apr - Jun 2003
Traineeships Established	0	21	15	9

## **Complaints Handling**

During the financial year a total of sixty (60) complaints were lodged under the Council's complaints handling procedures. Fifty four (54) of these have been resolved and closed. Investigations identified a number of instances where organisations have breached the AQTF standards including: recognition of prior learning; issuance of Statements of Attainment and Qualifications and ethical marketing and assessment. Once the issue of non-compliance has been highlighted to the relevant RTO, action is taken to address the area of concern. On several occasions audit site visits have been instigated.

## **Administration**

The Council is supported through the services of the Office of the Training Accreditation Council established early 2003 and, prior to that date by the Quality Assurance and Recognition Branch of the WA Department of Education and Training. One of the Office's key roles is to process applications for registration of training organisations, accreditation of courses and skills training programs and the qualifications gained from such courses/programs and the implementation of the AQTF. The Office of the Council and the Quality Assurance and Recognition Branch (now VET Teaching and Learning) of the Department also provides substantial support to the work of the Council on complex policy issues.

## **Information/Advisory Service**

In May 2002 *RTONet* was launched by the former Department of Training to provide RTOs with a central point of access to the various Departmental business operations and provide a better overall service to clients. Now RTOs can view their details through the State Training and Recognition System (STARS) by accessing *RTONet*. *RTONet* is a direct link to all systems within the Department of Education and Training through one gateway that shows all their activities.

RTOs can view their registration details with the Council including their contact details, scope of registration and delivery profile. They can also view qualifications/course details and the Training Records System (TRS) on trainees and apprenticeships

*RTONet* has proved a successful resource for RTOs in monitoring their registration activities.

## **Support products**

A range of printed material is available to assist applicants, including guides for applicants and application templates. A significant amount of this material is available on the Council's website.

## **Workshops**

Workshops have been provided to promote knowledge and understanding of national and State policies, including the concept of Training Packages, competency based assessment and processes for registration and accreditation. Specific workshops include:

- **Information Sessions**  
A two hour session providing an overview of the opportunities for and responsibilities of RTOs, provided by the Office of the Council on behalf of the Council. The session outlines the requirements and standards for registration under the AQTF and the process of registration.
- **Registration Standards Workshop**  
A full day workshop designed for training providers that have decided to become a RTO and existing RTOs going through renewal of registration. The workshop provides an understanding of the registration process, assistance in interpreting the registration standards and understanding the role of evidence in the submission process.
- **Workshops on Internal Audit and Self Assessment**  
On the Council's behalf, the Department of Education and Training holds workshops designed to provide guidance to RTOs on internal audit/self assessment (Standard 1.4). The workshops also assist RTOs to develop a risk management plan that will support compliance with AQTF standard 1.8.

## **Website**

The Council website was launched in July 2001 and since going live has proven to be very successful, with RTOs using the website as a regular source of information to ensure that they are keeping up with the latest information, with particular emphasis on the AQTF.

General information about the benefits of registration, how to deliver training, validation fees and scope of registration is provided for current and potential RTOs.

The Council website provides the following information:

### **About TAC**

*The role of the Training Accreditation Council*

### **Contacts**

*Where we are located  
Contact List*

### **How to become an RTO**

*Why register our Training Organisation?  
AQTF  
AQTF Approval Forms  
Registration Information*

*Sessions and Workshops*  
*Policies*  
*Scope of Registration*  
*Partnership Arrangements*  
*Ethical Marketing and Advertising*  
*Search for an RTO*  
*Internal Audit and Self Assessment*

**Information for RTO's**

*How to deliver training*  
*Link to NTIS*  
*Monitoring*  
*Complaints*  
*RTO Net*

**Auditors**

*Auditors*  
*Auditors Online*

**Publications**

*Publications*  
*Newsletter*  
*Annual Report*  
*Policies*  
*Glossary of terms*

**Feedback**

## APPENDIX 1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Accreditation** means the formal recognition of a course by the State or Territory course accrediting body in line with the *Standards for State and Territory Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies*.

**Accredited course** means a structured sequence of vocational education and training that has been accredited and leads to an Australian Qualifications Framework qualification or Statement of Attainment.

**Articulation** means the formal linkage between different levels of qualifications. Articulation arrangements allow for horizontal and vertical movement between courses and training programs.

**Assessment** means a process of collecting evidence and making judgements on whether competency has been achieved to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace, as expressed in the relevant endorsed industry/enterprise competency standards or the learning outcomes of an accredited course.

**Audit** means a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining evidence to determine whether the activities and related outcomes of a training organisation comply or continue to comply with the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations*.

**Auditor** means an independent person recognised by the Training Accreditation Council to ensure that the AQTF standards for registration/accreditation have been adequately addressed by an RTO.

**Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)** means the policy framework that defines all qualifications recognised in post-compulsory education, vocational education and training and higher education within Australia. The AQF comprises titles and guidelines, which define each qualification, together with principles and protocols covering articulation and certification.

**Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)** means the nationally agreed quality arrangements for the vocational education and training system agreed to by the Ministerial Council.

**Competency** describes a person's ability in a range of areas, including; task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job or environment skills.

**Competency standards** reflect knowledge, skill and their application to the standard of performance required in employment.

**Industry organisations** represent industry, including peak business and union organisations, as well as specific Industry Training Councils (ITCs).

**Internal audit** means audits conducted by, or on behalf of, the organisation itself for internal purposes.

**Ministerial Council** means the ANTA Ministerial Council established under the Australian National Training Authority Agreement which is a Schedule to the *Australian National Training Authority Act 1992*, comprising the Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers responsible for vocational education and training, or any successor council comprising those Ministers.

**Mutual recognition** applies nationally and means:

- 1 The acceptance of the decisions of the registering body that has registered a training organisation, or the course accrediting body that has accredited a course, by another registering/course accrediting body, without there being any further requirement, including:
  - (a) the recognition by each registering body of the decisions of registering bodies in other States and Territories in relation to the registration of training organisations and the imposition of sanctions including cancellation of registration; and
  - (b) the recognition by each course accrediting body of the decisions of course accrediting bodies in other States and Territories in relation to the accreditation of courses.
- 2 The recognition by all State and Territory registering/course accrediting bodies of the national endorsement of Training Packages as notified on the National Training Information Service.
- 3 The recognition and acceptance by an RTO of Australian Qualifications Framework qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by other RTOs, enabling individuals to receive national recognition of their achievements.

**National Training Framework (NTF)** means the system of vocational education and training that:

- a applies nationally;
- b is endorsed by the ANTA Ministerial Council;
- c is made up of the AQTF and nationally endorsed Training Packages.

**Nationally Recognised Training** - means training and assessment, delivered by a RTO, which meets the requirements specified in national industry/enterprise Training Packages or in accredited courses.

**National Training Information Service** means the National Register for recording information about RTOs, Training Packages and accredited courses. Information held on the NTIS is searchable and publicly accessible via the Internet. The NTIS contains comprehensive information on endorsed Training Packages which have been approved by Ministers for recording on the NTIS. Information includes: full details of competency standards; a listing of National Training Quality Council noted support materials with contact source; details of Australian Qualifications Framework accredited courses/qualifications; and contact details and scope of registration of all RTOs.

**Non-compliance** means failure to comply with one or more of the AQTF Standards.

**Period of registration** means the period for which an RTO is registered. The period of registration is five years (unless cancelled or suspended).

**Partnership** means the Association between a non-registered organisation and a RTO to achieve recognised training.

**Recognition Authority** means the Authority in a State or Territory that registers training organisations for the purpose of delivering training services to specified standards.

**Recognition of prior learning (RPL)** means the recognition of skills and knowledge against course outcomes, ie. learning outcomes. RPL also involves the recognition of competencies held against relevant competency standards.

**Recognition of Current Competencies** means the same as RPL.

**Registered Training Organisation** means a training organisation registered by State/Territory Recognition Authorities as Nationally recognised, for the provision of training products and services.

**Registered Training Organisation (QETO)** means a Quality Endorsed Training Organisation whose quality endorsement includes meeting one or more core standards relating to training service provision. *NB: QETO was separated from the Australian Recognition Framework in 2000 and will no longer be a part of the Framework beyond 2003.*

**Registration Agreement** means the formal agreement between an RTO and the Training Accreditation Council.

**Scope (of registration)** means the range of training products and services, within one or more defined industry areas, that a training organisation is registered to deliver.

**State or Territory registering body** means the body responsible, under the State or Territory vocational education and training legislation and decision making framework, for administration of the accreditation of courses.

**Statement of Attainment** means a record of recognised learning which, although falling short of an Australian Qualifications Framework qualification, may contribute towards a qualification outcome, either as attainment of competencies within a Training Package, partial completion of a course leading to a qualification, or completion of a nationally accredited short course which may accumulate towards a qualification through Recognition of Prior Learning processes.

**Strategic Industry Audit** means the audit of RTOs operating in a specific industry or industry sector targeted on the basis of identified risks relating to that industry or sector.

**Training organisation** means an organisation that can be registered with State and Territory Recognition Authorities to develop and deliver training products and services. Training organisations include: TAFE institutions, private training organisations, RPL and assessment agencies, Group Training Companies, industry organisations and workplaces.

**Training package** means a set of national training resources consisting of national competency standards, assessment guidelines and national qualifications. These components will be endorsed by the National Training Framework Committee and approved by Ministers. The package can also include non-endorsed components, namely: assessment materials, learning strategies and professional development materials.

**Training products** means Training Packages qualifications and accredited courses.

**Training Provider School** means a school registered with the Council under the Joint Ministerial Policy Statement.

**Unit of competency** means a discrete component within a competency standard. It comprises a title, a short description of its purpose and the constituent elements of competency, together with associated performance criteria. It usually includes a range of variables and may include an evidence guide.

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## APPENDIX II

## ACRONYMS

AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ARF	Australian Recognition Framework
ITC	Industry Training Council
NTF	National Training Framework
QETO	Quality Endorsed Training Organisation
RCAB	Registering and Course Accrediting Body
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
STB	State Training Board
TAC	Training Accreditation Council
VET	Vocational Education and Training

## APPENDIX III

### **FUNCTIONS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE TRAINING ACCREDITATION COUNCIL 2002/2003**

<b>FUNCTIONS/MEETINGS</b>
Graduation Parade of Recruit School – Police Academy
2002 Career Choice Expo
2002 Science and Technology Innovation Fund Announcements
Retail Trainee of the Year Awards
2002 Training Excellence Awards
2002 Adult Learners' Week Awards Presentation
Narrogin Open Day
Cunderdin Open Day
Launch of Artscope
Annual Open Day – WA College of Agriculture – Narrogin
2002 Annual Training Forum
Celebration of Training in the ASRITC
Annual Open Day - WA College of Agriculture - Harvey
Auditors Professional Development Workshop
2002 Training Forum – VET in Schools
Recognition Authorities meeting - Sydney
Curriculum Council end of year function with Chairperson Professor Lesley Parker.
Meeting with the Review Group of the Interface between Education and Training
Meeting with the Minister for Education and Training
Advance Business College official opening
Wholesale Retail and Property Services ITC Awards Presentation