



Training Accreditation Council
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT
2003-2004

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 2003 and ending 30 June 2004.

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Ian C Hill
Chair
Training Accreditation Council

19 August 2004

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Note: A Glossary of Terms and Acronyms have been provided at Appendix 1 and 2 to assist with the reading of this report.

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.



Ms Michelle Gianatti
Member



Mr Geoff Hawke
Swan TAFE



Dr Irene Ioannakis
Caterpillar Institute (WA) Pty Ltd



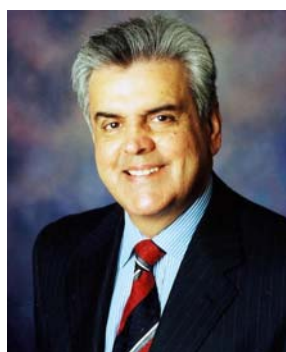
David Wood
Seven Oaks Senior College



Ms Lorraine Carter
Woolworths (WA) Pty Ltd



Mr Michael Keep
Alcoa World Alumina Australia



Mr Ian Hill
Chairman

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 2003/2004 Annual Report for the Training Accreditation Council (the 'Council').

This year the Council has moved to reporting on an outcomes basis in order to provide a clearer overview of the achievement of its key functions as outlined in the *Vocational Employment and Training Act 1996* and to reflect the work undertaken by the Office of the Training Accreditation Council.

The past 12 months have been extremely busy with an increase in applications to the Council in all Registration areas and a significant increase in Course Accreditations, predominately in specialist areas of study not currently covered by Training Packages. In addition the Council has continued with its Integrated Monitoring Strategy . Two Strategic Industry Audits were completed during this reporting period with the finalisation of the audit of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training and the Transport and Distribution Strategic Audit (existing workers).

The Councils extensive audit schedule for 2003/04 involved over 350 audits, included the audit of eight TAFE Colleges and the majority of schools operating as Training Providers.

All schools operating as Training Providers were required to renew their registration with the Council during the reporting period and an extensive auditing program of the schools was undertaken. Following the re-registration process, there are currently 16 Government Schools registered as Training Providers, six Agricultural Colleges registered as Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and one independent school registered as an RTO. Vocational Employment and Training (VET) for School Students continues to play a critical role in addressing the post compulsory education opportunities for 15 – 19 year olds.

In January 2004, a new panel of RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers was appointed through the State tender process. The panel consists of eight auditors who's primary role is to undertake audits of training organisations to determine compliance with the AQTF. All auditors appointed to the panel have extensive experience within the VET sector and play a vital role in strengthening its quality.

This year also saw the move of the Office of the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) to its new location at 22 Hasler Road, Osborne Park, co-located with the Department of Education Services and the Curriculum Council. The move has strengthened the independence of the

Council and facilitated greater information sharing between the Accreditation bodies responsible for the K-12, VET and the Higher Education Sectors.

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.

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 through 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.

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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.

OUTCOMES

During 2003/2004 the Council's strategic focus has been on achieving the following outcomes:

Outcome 1 – Management of Council Functions and Legislative Responsibilities

Success of the Council in achieving this outcome is demonstrated by the extent to which:

- council functions are carried out in an appropriate and timely manner through deployment of clear and transparent policies and processes; and
- legislative requirements are met.

Priorities for the Council to achieve this outcome are that the TAC:

- has appropriate processes for managing its responsibilities under the VET Act and Government legislation;
- fulfils its requirements under the National Training Framework with respect to AQTF standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies; and
- monitors the performance of RTOs in maintaining the AQTF standards.

Outcome 2 – Effective working relationships and provision of AQTF Support Services to Registered Training Organisations and key stakeholders.

Success of the Council in achieving this outcome is demonstrated by the extent to which:

- stakeholders are aware of the Council's requirements and priorities; and
- council requirements are deployed by stakeholders and clients.

Priorities for the Council to achieve this outcome are:

- that stakeholders are aware of the Council's requirements and priorities;
- that clients/stakeholders are kept informed of TACs performance in meeting the requirements of the VET Act; and
- that RTOs and prospective RTOs are aware of the AQTF requirements and their obligations.

To enable the Council to progress the priorities, work undertaken and issues considered by the Council included:

- consultation with stakeholders; and
- provision and review of consumer information

The infrastructure that is in place to support the Council's key activities and the provision of ready advice to clients and stakeholders includes a 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 holds full meetings on a monthly basis to consider 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 of applications that are submitted to the Council for consideration. Council members also attend meetings and functions as representatives of the Council (outlined in Appendix III).

The Council formally met 19 times over the 12 months to 30 June 2004.

The Council is supported through the services of the Office of the Training Accreditation Council located in Osborne Park. The Office's key role 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 also provides substantial support to the work of the Council on policy issues.

Outcome 1

Management of Council Functions and Legislative Responsibilities

Outcome Description:

Council functions are carried out in an appropriate and timely manner through deployment of clear and transparent policies and processes and legislative requirements are met.

Priorities for the Council to achieve this outcome are that TAC:

- has appropriate processes for managing its responsibilities under the VET Act and Government legislation;
- fulfils its requirements under the National Training Framework with respect to AQTF standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies; and
- monitors the performance of RTOs in maintaining the AQTF standards.

To enable the Council to progress the priorities, work undertaken and issues considered by the Council included:

- 1.1 ongoing management of the annual audit schedule for accreditation, registration and amendments to registration of RTOs against the AQTF Standards and in accordance with the AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies;
- 1.2 the Integrated Monitoring Strategy including Strategic Industry Audits;
- 1.3 recognition of skills and qualifications by individuals in conjunction with Industry Training Councils;
- 1.4 VET for School Students activities;
- 1.5 review of Change of Ownership Guidelines;
- 1.6 audit of compliance with AQTF Standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies;
- 1.7 appointment of a new panel of auditors; and
- 1.8 examination of transition arrangements to the Training and Assessment Training Package.

This report provides details using these headings.

1.1 Ongoing management of the annual audit schedule for accreditation, registration and amendments to registration of RTOs in line with the AQTF Standards

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 (RCABs).

The Council is responsible for undertaking audits of RTOs against the standards. The annual audit schedule of the Council incorporates registration audits and audits outlined in the Council's Integrated Monitoring Strategy. 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.

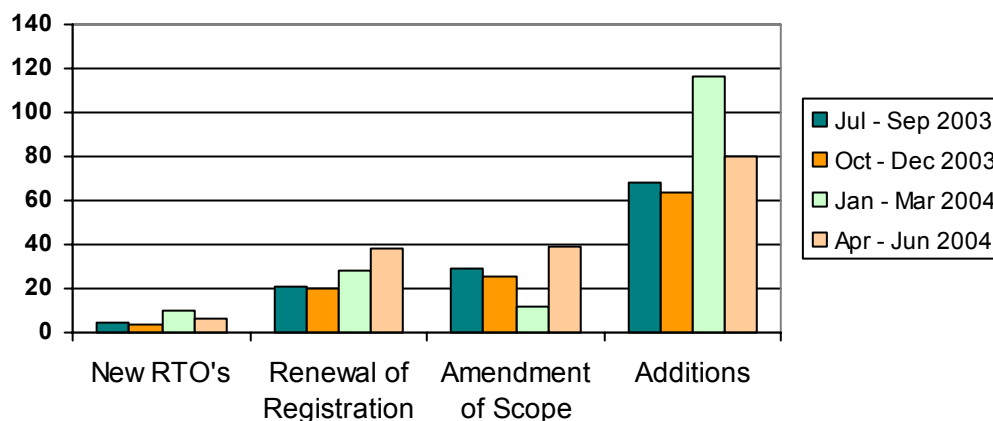
Registration of Training Organisations

There are 1029 RTOs currently registered to deliver training in Western Australia. A total of 408 RTOs are registered with the Council and a further 621 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.

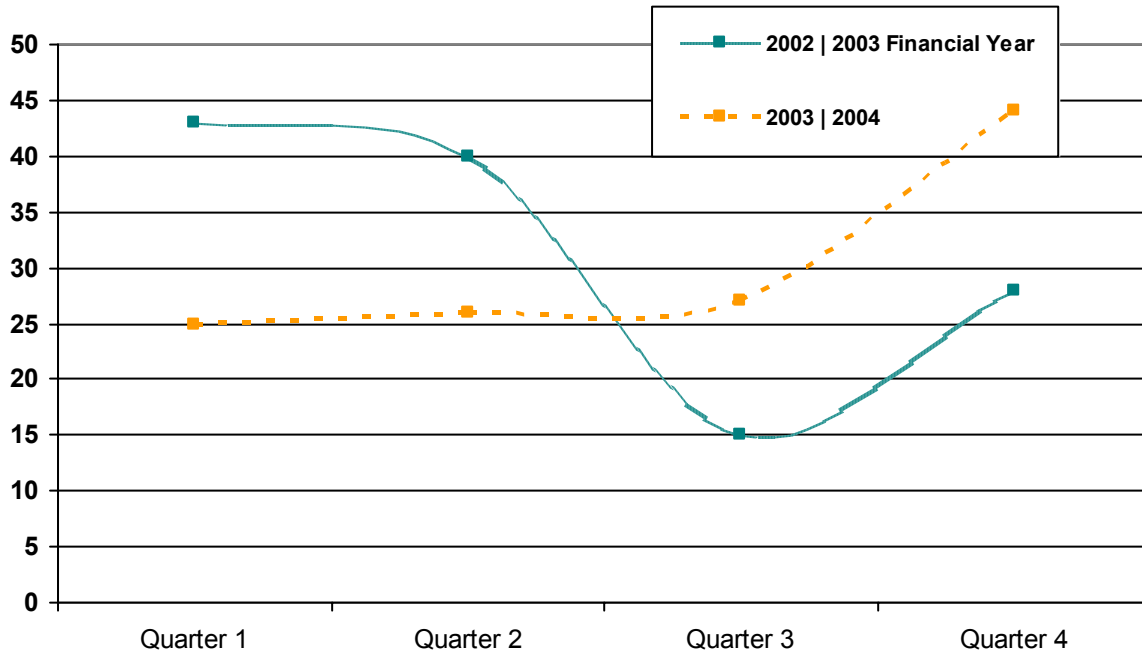
During the 2003/2004 year, Council has considered the following applications from training organisations:

- 25 registrations with scope (new);
- 107 re-registrations;
- 119 amendments to scope; and
- 270 notifications received from RTOs adding courses/qualifications to their current scope.

Applications to Council by Type

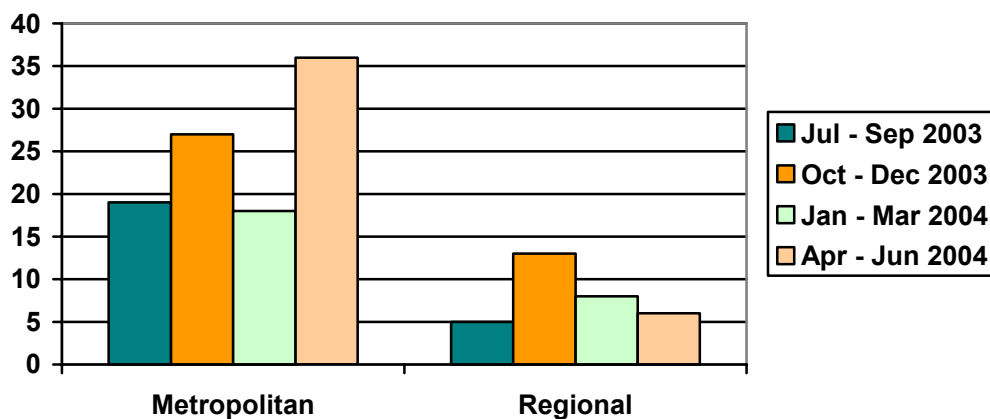


Registration Comparison



The table above indicates the number of applications per month considered by the Council during 2003/2004 and provides a comparison with the previous year. Registration activity has increased by just over 4% during the 2003/2004 financial year contributing to a 30% increase in registrations considered by the Council over the last two years.

Registration Delivery Areas



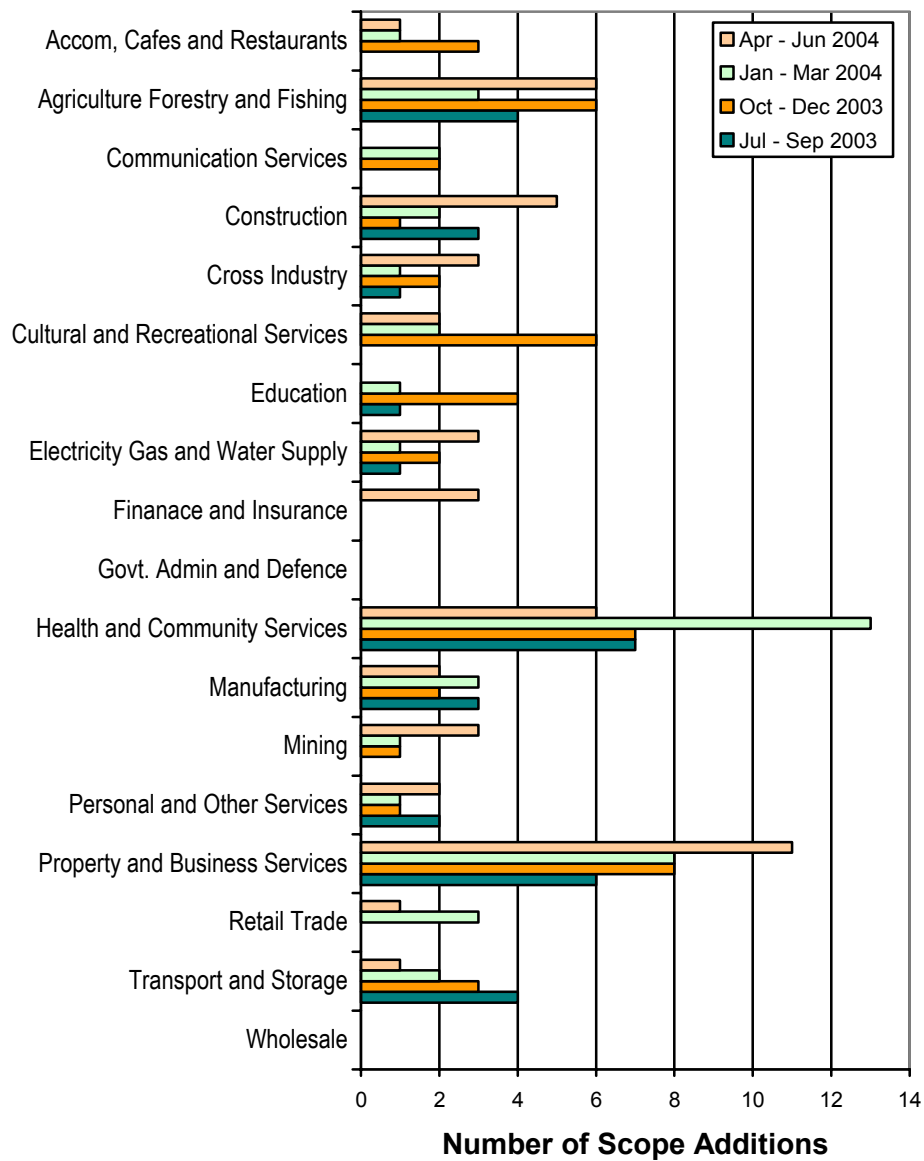
Of the 132 new RTOs and renewal of registration providers registered during the 2003/2004 financial year, 100 were based in the metropolitan area and 32 were from regional areas.

Industry Areas of Scope Validation

The range of industry areas added to an RTO's scope during the 2003/2004 financial year was significantly reduced from the previous financial year. This is a result of the maturing nature of the training package system with less new packages being introduced in the reporting period. The Property and Business Services and Health and Community Services industry areas both had 33 additions to scope, being the leading industry areas.

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

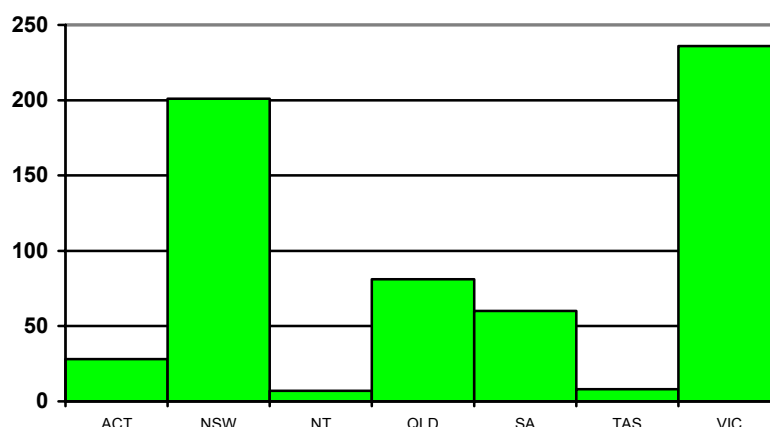
- Property and Business Services (33);
- Health and Community Services (33);
- Agriculture (19); and
- Construction (11).



Mutual Recognition

The number of RTOs from other States registered to deliver training in Western Australia under the Mutual Recognition Protocols increased in 2003/2004 to 621. 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.

Number of RTOs operating in WA under Mutual Recognition



Course Accreditation

During 2003/2004 the Council approved a total of 118 courses for accreditation. Nine courses were rejected by the Council as they duplicated a Training Package qualification or did not meet the Guidelines for Course Accreditation.

Accredited courses meet the training needs not addressed by endorsed Training Packages. The trend in recent years has been for a reduction in the total number of accredited courses due to the continued implementation of new Training Packages. This trend continued in 2003/04 as the accreditation period has expired for many courses and many of these courses have been replaced by Training Package qualifications. However, in 2003/04 the Council approved 45% more accredited courses than the previous year. The increase was due to a large number of applications to address the needs of specialist areas not currently covered by Training Packages

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.

Accredited Courses	
	Current Period
Total Accredited Courses	399
Accreditation activity during the reporting period	
• Courses Rejected	9
• Courses Re-accredited	57
• Courses Accredited	61

Complaints Management

One of the important functions continuing to be provided by the Office of the Training Accreditation Council is the investigation of complaints made by sector stakeholders. Complaints may result in RTOs being audited but are often resolved through discussion with complainants and RTOs.

Forty two complaints were received during the reporting period, eighteen less than for the previous reporting period. Of the 42 complaints logged, 31 were resolved or the complainant did not wish to pursue the matter any further; eleven remain active and are currently being investigated.

No. Complaints 2003/2004

Type of Complaint	No. Received
Assessment	8
Recognition of Prior Learning	2
Issuance of Statements of Attainment and Qualifications	9
Ethical Marketing	6
Systems for quality learning and assessment	1
Access and Equity	1
Legislative Compliance	1
Learning and Assessment Strategies	12
Qualifications of staff; and Learning and Assessment Strategies	1
Assessment; and Learning and Assessment Strategies	1
Total Complaints	42

Two complaints audits occurred in the reporting period.

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 2003 to June 2004, 141 traineeships were established.

Traineeships				
	Jul - Sep 2003	Oct - Dec 2003	Jan - Mar 2004	Apr - Jun 2004
Traineeships Established	89	3	37	12

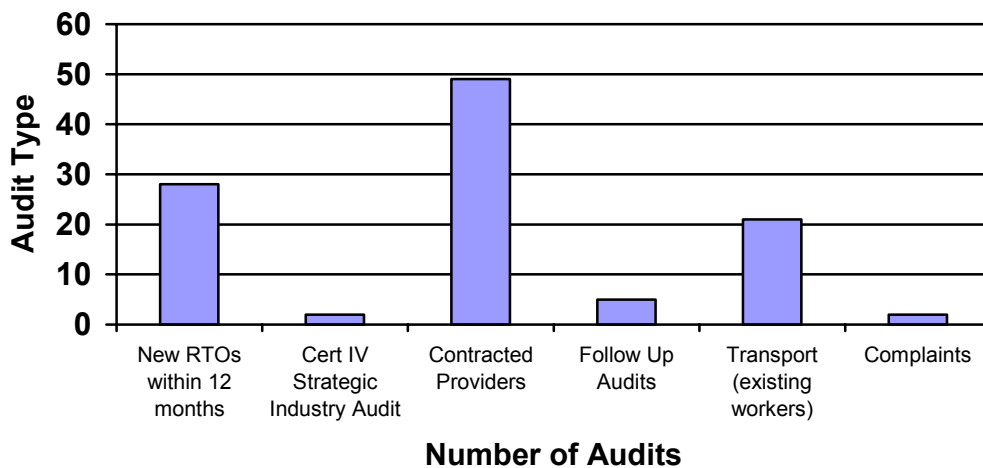
1.2 Integrated Monitoring Strategy and Strategic Industry Audits

In addition to audits undertaken by the Council for the purpose of registration and renewal of registration of RTOs, the Council is required to undertake the following audits of RTOs, in accordance with the AQTF standards for Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies:

- audits within twelve months of initial registration; and
- 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.

The Council has adopted a planned integrated approach to the implementation of AQTF audits so that audits affecting an individual RTO such as those listed above, can be integrated to minimise disruption to the RTO. Audits of this nature are called Monitoring Audits. The following chart provides information on the type and number of audits conducted in the reporting period as part of the Council's monitoring program:

Monitoring /Audits July 2003 - June 2004



A total of 107 Monitoring Audits were conducted in the 12 months ending 30 June 2004. Specific areas targeted for audit included:

- Completion of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (BSZ40198) Strategic Industry Audit – This audit commenced in 2002 and was completed in July 2003, the audit was prompted by sector wide concerns about the delivery of the qualification which underpins standard seven of the AQTF;
- Contracted Providers – The Office of the TAC works collaboratively with the Training Resource Allocation Branch of the Department of Education and Training to identify RTOs in receipt of public money and the qualifications for which they are funded;
- Transport and Distribution Strategic Industry Audit – The Office of TAC was approached by the Transport and Distribution ITC to undertake an audit of those RTOs delivering existing worker traineeships. The traineeships are linked to the Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing) and Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport). Both the ITC and the Department are keen to ensure the quality of the training and assessment being undertaken as a part of these traineeships;

- New RTOs within 12 months – The standards for Registering and Course Accrediting Bodies (RCABs) require that all RTOs that have been initially registered be audited within 12 months of their operation (standard 16.2b); and
- 2003/4 Follow ups – Several RTOs audited during 2002/2003 were identified as requiring follow up in 2003/4.

In addition to the above audits, 2 complaints related audits were undertaken in response to substantiated complaints.

Strategic Industry Audits

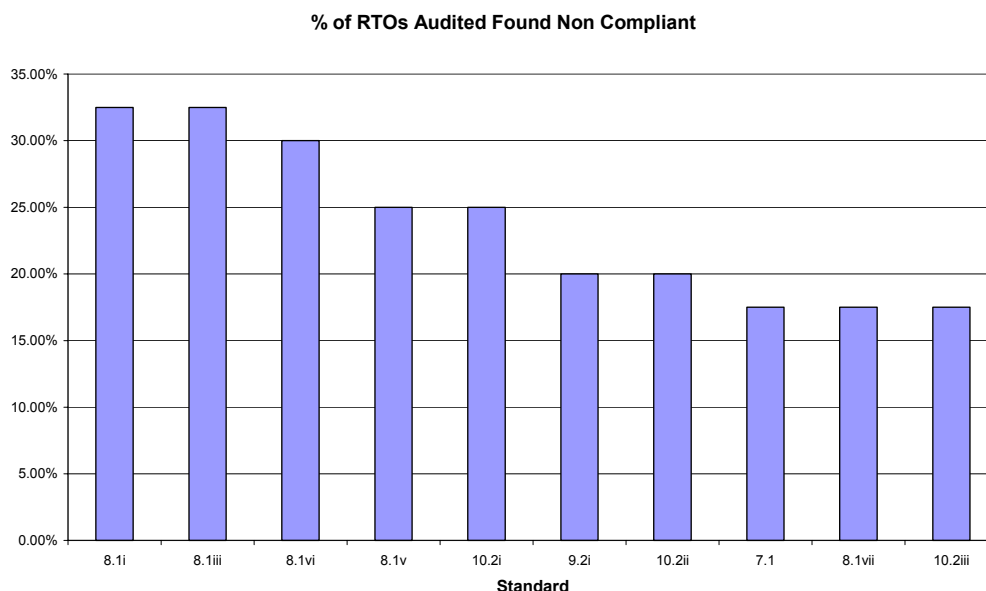
Risks to the vocational education and training system are identified at the State level through consultation with stakeholders and at the national level through the National Training Quality Council. Strategic Industry Audits are undertaken where a risk is identified within a specific industry area.

Two Strategic Industry Audits have been completed, 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 (BSZ40198) Strategic Industry Audit

The Strategic Industry Audit of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training which was predominately undertaken in the previous reporting period was completed in October 2003.

The most commonly occurring non compliances amongst the RTOs audited are included in the chart below:



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)

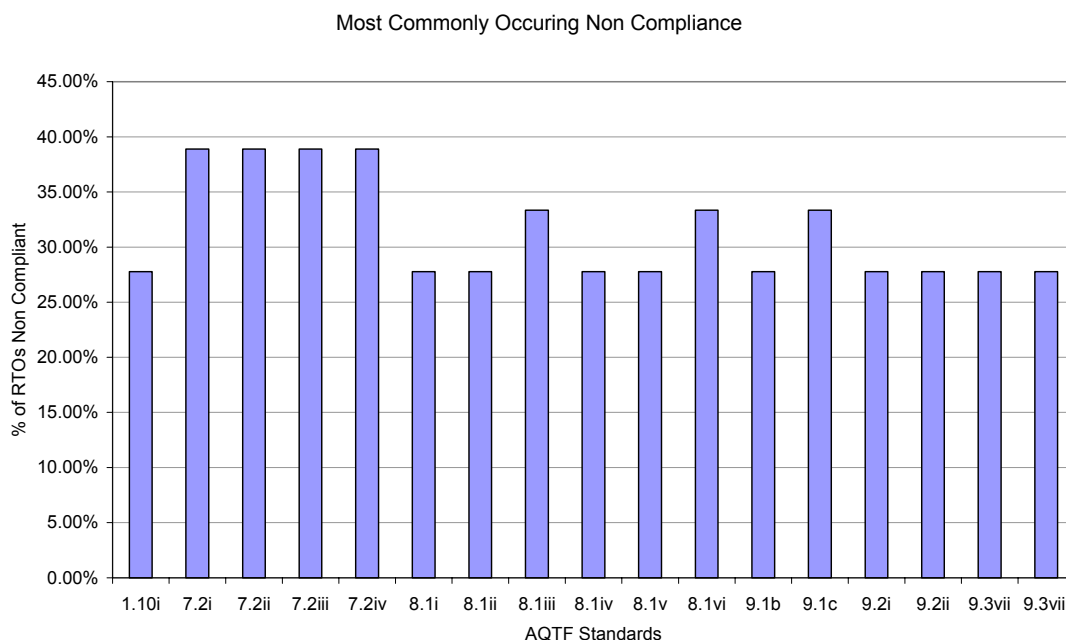
Findings from the Strategic Industry Audit have been provided to the developers of the Training and Assessment Training Package to be released in 2004. They have also been provided to the VET Teaching and Learning Directorate within the Training arm of the Department of Education and Training to inform the development of targeted professional development programs.

Transport and Distribution Strategic Industry Audit (existing workers)

In response to concerns from the Transport and Distribution Industry Training Council about the training and assessment of existing worker traineeships in the Transport and Distribution industry, a Strategic Industry Audit of Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing) and Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport) (where these qualifications are linked to the existing worker traineeships), was undertaken.

Twenty two RTOs were identified as delivering the existing worker traineeships through the Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Warehousing) and the Certificate III in Transport and Distribution (Road Transport) in Western Australia.

The following graph shows the most commonly occurring non compliances for the RTOs audited.



The findings of the telephone survey of trainees which was conducted prior to the on-site visits indicated that training, assessment and records management processes were managed inconsistently across the RTOs. The findings of the on-site audits tend to support this as there were varying degrees of compliance in these areas recorded by the RTOs.

Significant issues were highlighted by the number of non compliances that required rectification. In particular, the following areas yielded the most non compliance: induction

programs for staff; assessment processes, understanding of competency based training and assessment; student support through the assessment process; lack of documented training and assessment plans; and the development and validation of assessment strategies.

Of significant concern from this audit was the high number of non compliant RTOs against the requirements of the AQTF. In particular, that four RTOs recorded non compliances in over 40% of the standards audited. These four RTOs have been targeted for a follow up audit within 12 months.

Following the completion of the Western Australian audit, the National Training Quality Council (NTQC) endorsed a collaborative national strategic audit with a focus on training in the Transport industry to be conducted in 2004. Agreement was reached that Western Australia will not re-audit its training providers within the transport industry but will participate through providing the final report of its audit; providing input to the development of the methodology for the national audit, and by participating in the telephone survey of employers and trainees.

Monitoring Strategy 2004

In February 2004 the Council endorsed the 2004 Monitoring Strategy. A risk management approach was taken in the development of the Council's Monitoring Strategy. The strategy incorporated risks that were identified at the national level through the National Training Quality Council. Risks are also identified at the state level through consultation with industry training councils. The Department of Education and Training was invited to identify risks.

Risk areas endorsed by the Council for inclusion in the 2004 Monitoring Strategy included:

- contracted RTOs;
- RTOs in partnership with schools;
- fully on the job traineeships;
- Health – existing worker traineeships for hospital support workers; and
- the Process Manufacturing Industry.

The majority of the risk areas identified in the 2004 Monitoring strategy will be investigated during the next reporting period.

1.3 Recognition of Skills and Qualifications by Individuals in Conjunction with 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 2004 five ITCs had been endorsed by the Council to offer skills recognition services. These were:

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

From July 2003 to June 2004 there were 34 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 2003	Oct-Dec 2003	Jan-Mar 2004	Apr-Jun 2004
Bricklaying	2	0	0	1
Carpentry & Joinery	3	1	2	0
Cooking	6	2	4	7
Engineering Tradesperson Fabrication	1	0	0	0
Metal Fabrication	0	0	0	1
Painting Decorating	0	0	0	1
Stonemasonry	0	0	0	1
Wall and Floor Tiling	1	0	0	1
Total	13	3	6	12

1.4 VET for School Students Activities

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*.

All schools operating as Training Providers were required to renew their registration with the Council by the 31 December 2003. Following the re-registration process, there are currently 16 Government Schools registered as Training Providers, six Agricultural Colleges registered as RTOs and one independent school Wongatha CAPS, registered as an RTO.

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.

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.

1.5 Review of Change of Ownership Guidelines

In March 2004, the Council approved a revised set of Guidelines for Change of Ownership/Sale of Business or Notification of Liquidation/Bankruptcy. The Guidelines were reviewed and updated to ensure they comply with the requirements of the AQTF and provide a consistent approach when the legal entity of an RTO changes.

The Guidelines cover the following instances concerning RTOs and the impact on registration when :

- there is a proposed sale of an RTO by a natural person;
- the death of the owner of a RTO;
- an RTO is liquidated / bankrupt;
- two RTOs merge and one seeks to relinquish RTO status;
- one RTO splits into two and both organisations requires registration;
- there is a change of name but not the legal entity of an RTO; and
- there is a change in the legally responsible person, contact person and change of address.

The Guidelines are available on the Council website at www.tac.wa.gov.au

1.6 Establishment of New Panel of RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers

In December 2003, a new panel of RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers was appointed through the State Tender process. The panel was appointed for a one year period with two one year extension options available and commenced on 1 January 2004.

The primary role of the Auditors is to undertake audits of training organisations to determine compliance with the standards of the AQTF for RTOs and any other relevant State recognition policy for the purpose of obtaining or maintaining registration/accreditation with TAC. In addition, audits of RTOs may determine compliance with contracts associated with receipt of public funding for training.

Auditors appointed to the panel are:

RTO Auditors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Trice, Canington International Training • Heli Donaldson • Julie Large, JAL Enterprises • Russell Docking, Skills Resource Management Systems • Claire Werner, Summit Training Services • Mairead Dempsey, Training Assessment and Research Services • David Love, Workplace Skills Management* • Helen McCarter, Workplace Skills Management
Accreditation Reviewers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steve Trice, Canington International Training • Russell Docking, Skills Resource Management Systems • Mairead Dempsey, Training assessment and Research Services.

* Mr David Love resigned from the panel in March 2004.

The Auditing panel is required to participate in moderation activities throughout the period of the contract to ensure consistency in the approach to auditing of AQTF standard compliance by RTOs. During the reporting period three auditor's moderation forums have been managed by the Office of the TAC. They were held in August 2003, February and June 2004. The moderation forums followed an extensive induction workshop held for the panel in December 2003 prior to commencement of the panel contract in 2004.

1.7 Audit of compliance with 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 was undertaken in January 2004 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.

1.8 Examination of Transition Arrangements to the Training and Assessment Training Package;

The Office of the Training Accreditation Council jointly managed an ANTA funded national project with the Department of Employment and Training Queensland (project principal) ,to examine registration issues that will arise following final endorsement of the new Training and Assessment (TAA) Training Package by the National Training Quality Council.

The project specifically examined the transition arrangements for existing providers of the BSZ 40198 Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training qualification, to place the new qualifications from the TAA Training Package on to their scope of registration.

Meetings of RCAB representatives were held and a common tool was jointly developed to be used by all RCABs in their respective extension to scope processes. It was also agreed that there should be a national professional development strategy, a communication strategy and a consistent date for transition to the new arrangements.

Outcome 2

Effective working relationships and provision of AQTF Support Services to Registered Training Organisations, and key stakeholders.

Outcome Description:

Stakeholders are aware of the Council's requirements and priorities and have sufficient information and understanding to enable deployment of Council requirements.

Priorities for the Council to achieve this outcome are:

- that stakeholders are aware of the Council's requirements and priorities;
- that clients/stakeholders are kept informed of TAC's performance in meeting the requirements of the VET Act; and
- that RTOs and prospective RTOs are aware of the AQTF requirements and their obligations.

To enable the Council to progress the priorities, work undertaken and issues considered by the Council included:

- 2.1 consultation with stakeholders;
- 2.2 provision of consumer information; and
- 2.3 review of consumer information.

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

2.1 Consultation with Stakeholders

During 2003/2004, 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 Councils, RTOs and TAFE College Managing Directors.

The Office of the TAC met with Industry Training Councils to discuss a wide range of issues, including the 2004 Monitoring Strategy. Executive Officers of two ITCs have also made presentations at the Auditors Moderation Forums to ensure auditors are well aware of AQTF 'hot spots' facing their industry areas.

In addition, the Office of TAC has liaised with the TAFE Colleges Quality Group to discuss current priorities and implementation of new processes. The meetings also provided an opportunity for TAFE Colleges to express their views on issues relating to the Council's functions and the AQTF.

The Council collects feedback from RTOs following completion of the audit process. The feedback is incorporated into the Council's continuous improvement processes.

2.2 Provision of Consumer Information

The Council actively undertakes information provision 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 activities was undertaken during the year to provide information to stakeholders. These included:

- **Publication of a Council newsletter**
The Council has commenced the electronic publication of the *TAC Update* newsletters. 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.
- **Professional development forums provided to auditors**
The Office of the Council on behalf of the Council have undertaken moderation forums for auditors to promote the quality and consistency of audits. During 2003/2004 four general moderation forums were conducted.
- **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.
- **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 2003/2004.
- **RTO Net**
RTO Net was designed 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 *RTO Net*. *RTO Net* 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 traineeships and apprenticeships.

RTO Net 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.

2.3 Review of Consumer Information

Within the reporting period the Office of TAC has commenced a project to review information provided to RTOs on AQTF requirements and Council processes. This has included a review of all existing information sources.

An outcome of the review will include development of an information pack that specifies the requirements for registration and re-development of the TAC website including a complete review of the content of the website, a change in navigational style and a refreshing of the look and feel of the site.

It is intended that the outcomes of the review will be implemented in the next reporting period.

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 was no longer to be a part of the Framework after 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.

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 2003/2004

FUNCTIONS/MEETINGS
2003 Career Choice Expo
2003 Training Excellence Awards - WA
Annual Open Day – WA College of Agriculture – Narrogin
Annual Open Day - WA College of Agriculture - Harvey
Auditors Professional Development Workshop
2002 Training Forum – VET in Schools
Recognition Authorities Meetings – New South Wales South Australia
Meeting with the Minister for Education and Training
Wholesale Retail and Property Services ITC Awards Presentation
National Training Awards for Hospitality and Tourism Industry Training Council (Inc.)
2003 College Open Day for Western Australian College of Agriculture Cunderdin
Retail Trainee of the Year Award – Wholesale Retail and Personal Services
2003 Australian Training Awards – The Board of ANTA and the Chief Executive Officer, Janina Gawler
Teens Teachers Training Conference – A/Deputy Director General, Training Department of Education and Training
The SoCA Graduate Exhibition 2003
End of Year Function – Curriculum Council and Department of Education Services
Swan TAFE Annual Awards evening
The Margaret River Education Campus incorporating a Centre for Wine Excellence
Annual Graduation Evening – Challenger TAFEWA
West Coast College Prize Evening 2004