



Training Accreditation Council
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Annual Report

2008-2009

www.tac.wa.gov.au

To the Hon Peter Collier MLC

MINISTER FOR ENERGY; 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 2008 and ending 30 June 2009.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ian Hill', written over a horizontal line.

Ian Hill
CHAIRMAN
Training Accreditation Council

11 September 2009

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CHAIR'S REPORT

I am pleased to present to you the Training Accreditation Council's 2008-09 Annual Report.

Throughout the reporting period, the Council continued to operate within a framework of continuous improvement to provide a range of services to manage the quality assurance of vocational education and training (VET) in Western Australia. This included delivering information sessions and workshops on various aspects of the AQTF, and development of a comprehensive range of resources to assist RTOs in conducting their business.

In executing its functions under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (the VET Act) in 2008-09, the Council has undertaken 604 risk assessments of applications, 418 audits of registered training organisations, endorsed 184 initial and renewal of registration applications, accredited or re-accredited 90 courses, and issued 183 trade certificates.

During 2008-09, the Council through the Department of Education Services continued to work collaboratively with the Australian government and State and Territory governments to implement the *Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)* and ensure national consistency in application and monitoring of the AQTF Standards and outcomes based auditing.

The Council has embraced the intent of the AQTF to reduce regulatory burden through its adoption of a risk managed approach to the registration and auditing of training organisations. The Council, in line with national guidelines, undertook risk assessments for all applications to the Council during 2008-09. As a result 604 risk assessments were undertaken by the Council with only 42% of applications assessed as requiring an external desk and/or site visit audit. This has resulted in a more focussed approach to auditing, without compromising the integrity of the AQTF or the registration and audit process.

The Council has also adopted a more flexible and streamlined registration process, with the establishment and implementation of on-line lodgement of applications for registration.

Of major significance for the Council during this reporting period has been the review and introduction in mid June 2009 of amendments to the legislation (VET Act). The Council, through the Department of Education Services, has worked with the Department of Education and Training and played a lead role in contributing to the development of the legislative amendments with particular focus on areas impacting on the Council's regulatory role.

The amendments to the VET Act and the introduction of the *Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009 (General Regulations)* are the first substantive changes to the VET system in Western Australia for a number of years. The new General Regulations include the introduction of 'National model clauses' for the registration of training providers and accreditation of courses, and provisions for the administration of apprenticeships and traineeships.

The amended legislation came into effect on 10 June 2009. As a result of the introduction of the amendments, the Council has undertaken a review of its operations to identify areas impacted by the legislative changes. Work has already commenced to ensure the legislative amendments are implemented and incorporated within the operations of the Council.

During the reporting period, the Council continued to review risks associated with the closure of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and as a result established the Client Qualifications Register (CQR). The CQR is a mechanism by which the Council can maintain a permanent record of student achievements from private providers in the event that the registration of a provider ceases through the de-registration, sale or closure of the business entity. The information collected by the CQR will ensure issues such as access to student records and ongoing verification of achievements from closed providers can be addressed, while ensuring students and employers will not be disadvantaged.

The Council would like to acknowledge the professionalism and dedication from officers of the Training Accreditation Council Secretariat of the Department of Education Services and the ongoing assistance provided in supporting the work of the Council.

On balance, the vocational education and training sector in Western Australia continues to mature. Given the commitment of Western Australian registered training organisations to embracing the Australian Quality Training Framework as a quality assurance system for improvement, the Council looks forward to building on the excellent progress already made in Western Australia.



Ian C Hill
Chairman
Training Accreditation Council

2008-09 Highlights

Major achievements for 2008-09

The Council:

- endorsed 184 initial and renewal of registration applications and 285 extension to scope applications;
- approved a total of 90 courses for accreditation and re-accreditation;
- undertook 418 audits, which included 184 initial and renewal registration audits; 55 accreditation reviews; 77 monitoring audits and 102 extension to scope audits;
- conducted 604 risk assessments of RTO applications. Of the 604, 349 (57%) did not require an audit and 255 applications (42%) required either a desk and/or site audit;
- issued 183 trade certificates via the established trade skills recognition process;
- continued its strong focus on engaging and involving stakeholders and peak bodies in matters related to quality assurance and recognition arrangements;
- conducted 114 information sessions related to the AQTF, with participants from across Western Australia attending. Each information session focuses on the requirements of becoming an RTO and industry requirements;
- continued to review risks associated with the closure of RTOs and developed strategies for managing identified risks including the establishment of the Client Qualifications Register. To assist RTOs in the implementation of the CQR a total of seven (7) workshops were held with over 140 RTOs in attendance;
- engaged with key industry regulatory bodies to ensure that they can be confident that the training and assessment practices of RTOs adequately address their regulatory requirements;
- in conjunction with the Department of Education Services played a lead role in contributing to the development of the VET legislative amendments with particular focus on areas impacting the Council; and
- sponsored the 2008 'Trainer of the Year Award' category of the Western Australian Training Awards, with support from the Department of Education Services.

Major focus for 2009-10

- implement the changes resulting from the VET legislative amendments;
- Implement the AQTF Quality Indicators and review the ongoing implementation of the AQTF across the VET sector in Western Australia;
- continue to develop and implement strategies for streamlining regulation through improved linkages between licensing bodies, other regulatory bodies and VET regulators;
- maintain a leadership role in the national training framework and the implementation and ongoing development of quality assurance arrangements within the VET sector;
- ongoing implementation of the Council's Business Plan and Audit Strategy; and
- continue to engage and consult with stakeholders within the VET sector.

About this report

This report fulfils the requirements of Section 30(1) of the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* by reporting the operations of the Training Accreditation Council to the Minister for Training for the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009.

The Council's Business Plan is prepared on a financial year basis. Where possible, data for the 2008-09 reporting period and both the 2006-07 and 2007-08 reporting periods have been provided to allow a comparative assessment of the activities and achievements of the Council to be made.

The report is structured to include four (4) main sections (see below), which relate to the key outcome areas from the Council's business plan. Each section incorporates a range of indicators that the Council has developed that will be the focus of their work over the medium term. The indicators complement the four key outcomes identified below:

- The Council's legislative functions and responsibilities under the AQTF 2007 are carried out and managed effectively;
- The Council communicates effectively with clients and stakeholders;
- The Council effectively engages with relevant industry bodies; and
- The Council's clients are satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by the Council.

The amended *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* came into effect on 10 June 2009. Please note reference to the functions of the Council during this reporting period refer to the previous Act given that the greatest part of the reporting period fell within its jurisdiction.

INTRODUCTION

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Training Accreditation Council:

- will be open, accountable and transparent;
- is clear on its role as a regulatory body;
- will embed an outcomes focus;
- is fair and equitable; and
- will maintain a culture of continuous improvement.

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 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;
- 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 against Council decisions is available through the State Training Board under Section 31 of the Act.

Membership

The Training Accreditation Council has seven members who are appointed by the Minister for 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.



Mr Mark Simpson
Mark Simpson & Associates



Ms Lorraine Carter
Big W (WA) Pty Ltd



Dr Irene Ioannakis
WesTrac Pty Ltd



Mr David Wood
Curriculum Council



Mr Iain McDougall
Hospitality Group Training



Ms Liz Harris
Challenger TAFE



Mr Ian Hill
Chair

THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE COUNCIL WORKS

The Training Accreditation Council is an independent statutory body that provides for quality assurance and recognition processes for vocational education and training in Western Australia. The Council operates within the National Skills Framework and is the Western Australian Registering and Course Accrediting Body under the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF).

The AQTF is a set of nationally agreed quality assurance arrangements for training and assessment services delivered by training organisations. It also comprises of standards for the accreditation of courses. The AQTF was initially implemented in 2002, revised in 2005 and again in 2007 including the identification of excellence criteria. The AQTF comprises:

- (a) *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration;*
- (b) *AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies;*
- (c) *AQTF 2007 Excellence Criteria;*
- (d) *AQTF 2007 Standards for Accredited Courses; and*
- (e) *AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Course Accrediting Bodies.*

The Council is responsible for ensuring compliance with the relevant standards and for complying with both the Standards for Registering Bodies and Course Accrediting Bodies.

The Council is supported by the Department of Education Services through the services of the Training Accreditation Council Secretariat located in Osborne Park. One of the Secretariat's key roles is to process applications for registration of training organisations and accreditation of courses and skills training programs. The Training Accreditation Council Secretariat also provides substantial support to the work of the Council on policy issues.

The Council formally met 24 times over the twelve months to 30 June 2009.

The Council holds full meetings on a monthly basis to consider applications from organisations. However, in late 2007 the Council agreed to undertake a trial of holding meetings on a six (6) weeks basis during 2008, Council agreed to extend the trial to include 2009. Executive Committee meetings are held approximately every two (2) weeks to consider additional applications, resulting in Council considering applications within a relatively short period of time.

PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

In order to carry out its functions, the Council uses an outcomes based planning and reporting framework.

The framework consists of a Business Plan for the Council that is prepared on a three year basis (from 1 July 2008 – 30 June 2011) and reviewed annually, a corresponding operational plan for the support services provided by the Department of Education Services and an Annual Report on the achievements of the Council. In addition, the Council also reports on VET regulation related outcomes to the National Quality Council each year.

In supporting the work of the Council, the Department of Education Services' operational plan addresses the priorities outlined in the Council's business plan 2008-11. The TAC Secretariat reports progress to the Council.

This approach ensures comprehensive monitoring and reporting of the Council's achievements against the planned outcomes and provides a sound methodology for monitoring progress against the respective business/operational plans.

The Council has developed four (4) Key Outcomes that will be the focus of their work over the medium term. Sitting underneath the Key Outcomes are a range of indicators that the Council uses to meet and measure, and report against annually. In addition, Guiding Principles have been developed that communicate to the Council's stakeholders the way in which the Council intends to undertake its business.

OUTCOME 1 – The Council’s legislative functions and responsibilities under the AQTF are carried out and managed effectively

Outcome Indicators

The Training Accreditation Council’s success in achieving Outcome 1 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicators have been achieved:

- Council’s membership is maintained in accordance with the Vocational Education and Training Act 1996 (the Act);
- Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the Act and the Council’s Code of Conduct;
- Council’s policies and processes are reviewed regularly;
- The quality system, which provides the framework for Council to carry out its functions and responsibilities, is reviewed regularly;
- Internal audits are conducted regularly to ensure that Council’s policies and processes are being implemented;
- Compliance is maintained with the AQTF 2007 registering body standards; and
- Council’s annual reporting requirements are met.

Work undertaken by the Council to progress these priorities and to achieve Outcome 1 is detailed in the following sections.

AMENDMENTS TO LEGISLATION

On the 10 June 2009, amendments to the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* (the Act) and the *Vocational Education and Training Regulations (General) 2009* (the Regulations) came into effect. The amendments to the Act and the associated Regulations will impact on the functions of the Council; the requirements to be met by RTOs and changes impacting to the operations of the Apprenticeship system in Western Australia.

The functions of the Council are outlined in the revised Part 7a of the Act, which includes the introduction of a number of changes already familiar to RTOs. Prior to the introduction of the legislation, these requirements were incorporated into the policies and processes of the Council through Ministerial Guidelines issued under Section 13 of the Act. The Regulations have replaced the existing Ministerial Guidelines and provide a more robust foundation for the regulation of training providers and accredited courses in Western Australia.

The following changes to the Act impact on the operation of the Council:

- **Classification of Qualifications** - the amendments to the Act introduce a new classifications system that prescribes the qualifications that can only be delivered through a training contract and the qualifications that can be delivered through a training

contract or institutional delivery. The new classification system may impact RTOs delivering qualifications through apprenticeship pathways and /or those delivering traditional apprenticeship qualifications to international students through institutional delivery. The Council will monitor the implementation of the new classification system and the possible impact on RTOs.

- **Skills Recognition** - The Council is no longer responsible for the provision of skills recognition services for Trade qualifications. Following the amendments to the Act, all RTOs are able to offer skills recognition for all qualifications including traditional trade qualifications.
- **Provision of Assessment only services** - The amendments to the VET Act allows the Council to consider applications from training providers to provide assessment only services for qualifications and/or individual units of competence.
- **Return of information to the Council** - The Regulations will require RTOs to provide a return to the Council on a six monthly basis, containing the details of the qualifications and units of competency that have been achieved by individual students. This information will be collected through the Client Qualifications Register.

As a result of the introduction of the VET legislative amendments Council has reviewed its operations to identify areas impacted by the legislative changes and work has already commenced to implement the amendments. The Council envisages the impact of the legislative amendments on RTOs will be minimal, with many of the changes having already been incorporated within the Councils operations.

REGISTRATION OF TRAINING ORGANISATIONS

There were 1,663 training organisations registered to deliver training in Western Australia on 30 June 2009. A total of 508 of these organisations were registered with the Council and a further 1,155 were registered to deliver in Western Australia under national recognition arrangements. Forty two (42) of the 508 organisations registered with the Council were also delivering vocational education and training under the AQTF in countries other than Australia.

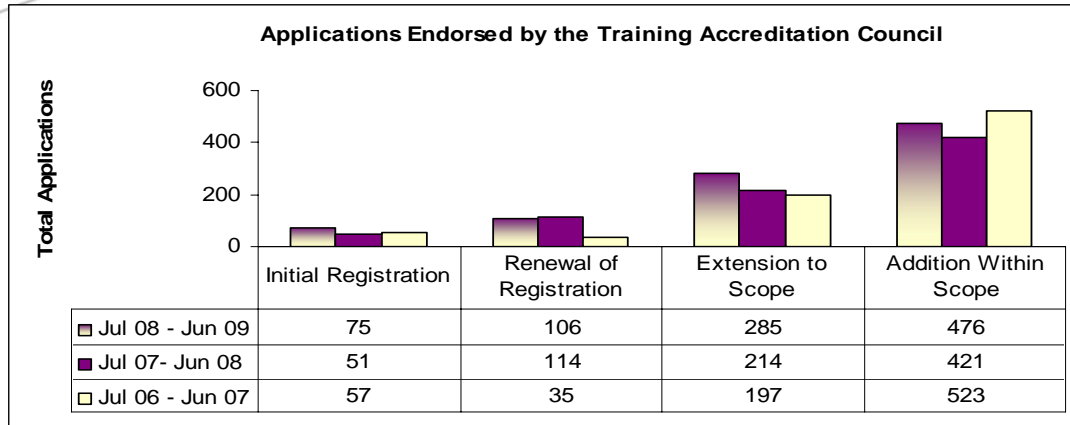
During the reporting period the overall number of organisations registered with the Council increased from 1,442 in 2007-08 to 1,663 in 2008-09, this represents an increase of over 15%. While the total number of Western Australian registered organisations increased from 456 in 2007-08 to 508 during the 2008-09 reporting period, an overall increase of over 10%.

During the 2008-09 year, the Council endorsed the following applications:

- 75 initial registrations;
- 106 renewals of registration;
- 285 extensions to scope; and
- 476 notifications received from RTOs adding courses/qualifications within their current scope.

During the reporting period only one RTO was de-registered by the Council.

Graph 1: Registration activity July 2008 – June 2009



There were 75 initial registrations endorsed by the Council during the reporting period. This represents an increase of 24 registrations (46%) compared to the previous reporting report. An increase of over 30% (from 214 in 2007-08 to 285 in 2008-09) was noted in the number of extension to scope applications endorsed by Council.

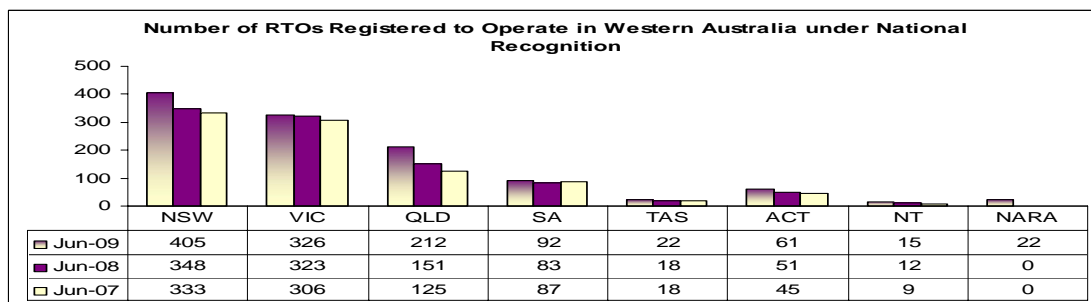
NATIONAL RECOGNITION

In addition to training organisations registered by the Council as at 30 June 2009, there were 1,155 interstate registered training organisations which operate, or planned to operate within Western Australia.

The data for this period also includes for the first time figures for organisations registered with the National Audit and Registration Agency (NARA), a body established within TVET Australia Limited (TVET), a Ministerial Company. In November 2006, the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) expanded TVET’s role to offer registration and audit services under delegation from State and Territories to organisations operating across two or more jurisdictions. During 2008-09, Western Australia progressed development of the delegation instrument to facilitate the MCVTE decision to enable TVET to undertake registration and audits on behalf of the Council. It is anticipated the delegation process will be finalised during the 2009-10 reporting period.

The number of organisations delivering under national recognition does not reflect actual delivery by interstate registered training organisations in Western Australia. Many organisations register with their primary recognition authority their intent to deliver, however, for a variety of reasons fail to follow through with actual delivery. Graph 2 shows registered training organisations, by State of registration, operating in Western Australia.

Graph 2: Interstate RTOs registered to operate in Western Australia as at 30 June 2009



THE TRAINING ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AUDIT STRATEGY

The Council, as part of its ongoing improvement process, implements a continuous audit strategy. This approach ensures a more flexible and fluid audit strategy, with the ability to address identified issues as they arise, complement the national approach to risk management and enable monitoring on an ongoing basis. The audit strategy includes regulatory audits such as registration audits, follow up audits and audits in response to complaints.

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

Applications to the Council from training organisations are risk assessed in line with the *National Guideline for Risk Management*. Risk indicators which focus on the performance of the RTO delivering quality skills outcomes and supplementary indicators which apply to the operational context of the RTO, determine the type, scale and scope of an audit.

Supplementary risk indicators for Western Australia

In August 2008, the Council agreed to incorporate specific Western Australian risk indicators in addition to the existing supplementary risk indicators. The additional state risk indicators have been developed to enhance the national risk assessment process and address specific concerns within Western Australia.

Additional indicators endorsed by Council include for example: applications for qualifications from the TAA04 Training and Assessment Training Package; delivery of training through an apprenticeship or traineeship pathway; significant increase in levels of qualifications; overseas delivery; additional compliance and policy requirements imposed by other government agencies; and change of key staff within the organisation.

As consultation continues with industry, registering bodies and other relevant stakeholders, the list of Council specific supplementary risk indicators may need to be revised.

MANAGEMENT OF THE ANNUAL AUDIT SCHEDULE

The Council is responsible for undertaking audits of registered training organisations against the three essential standards for registration specified in the AQTF. The Council also undertakes accreditation reviews against the standards as specified in the AQTF standards for accreditation.

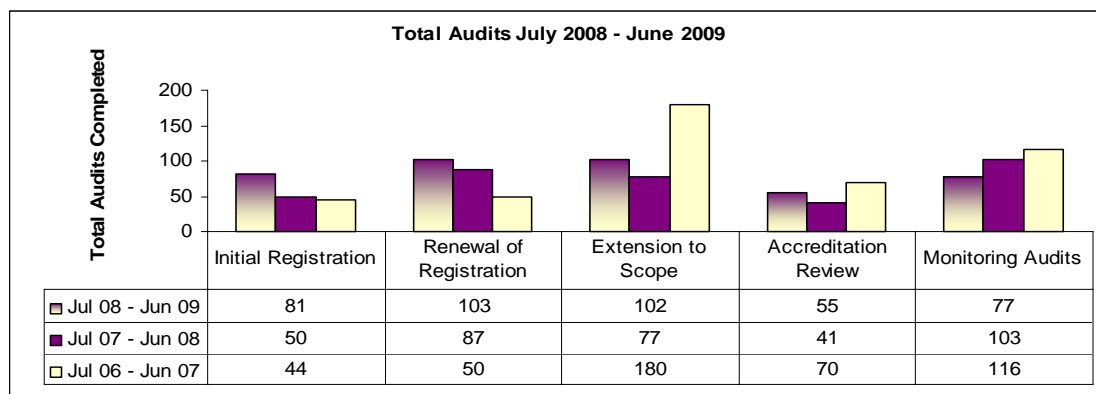
The Council, in line with national guidelines for risk management, has implemented a risk managed approach to audits, with risk assessments undertaken for all applications to the Council. An RTOs risk rating which is determined by evaluating relevant information may result in an RTO not requiring an audit.

During the 2008-09 reporting period, a total of 604 RTO risk assessments were undertaken by the Council. This represents an increase of over 55%, when compared with the 2007-08 reporting period total of 388. Of the 604 risk assessments undertaken in 2008-09, 349 applications (58%) did not require an audit, while an external desk and/or site visit audit was conducted for the remaining 255 applications (42%).

The Council’s audit strategy incorporates registration audits as well as strategic industry audits on the basis of identified risks. Wherever possible, these audits are integrated with audits for compliance with the Department of Education and Training’s Delivery and Performance Agreement held with private registered training organisations in receipt of public funds.

The Council’s integrated approach to auditing helps minimise disruption to registered training organisations. Graph 3 provides information on the type and number of audits conducted in the reporting period.

Graph 3: Total audits July 2008 – June 2009



A total of 418 audits were undertaken in the twelve (12) months ending 30 June 2009. This represents an increase of over 15% from the 2007-08 reporting period. The increase can be attributed to a rise of over 60% in audits conducted for new organisations seeking registration with the Council, while audits undertaken for re-registration increased by approximately 30% during this period.

During 2008-09, the number of extension to scope audits increased by over 30%. The increase may be attributed to training organisations expanding their delivery to meet the needs of clients and industry. The number of accreditation reviews also increased by over 30% during the reporting period.

Audits were undertaken in line with the Training Accreditation Council’s audit strategy.

COURSE ACCREDITATION

At 30 June 2009, there were 345 accredited courses in Western Australia. During 2008-09 the Council approved a total of 90 courses for accreditation and re-accreditation, an increase of over 30% from the previous reporting period.

Accredited courses meet training needs not addressed by Training Packages. The Council does not accredit a course if a Training Package qualification exists that can meet the same training outcome through customisation. In 2008-09 the total number of courses accredited decreased slightly, while the total number of courses re-accredited by the Council increased significantly from 32 in 2007-08 to 60 in 2008-09, an increase of over 85% during the reporting period.

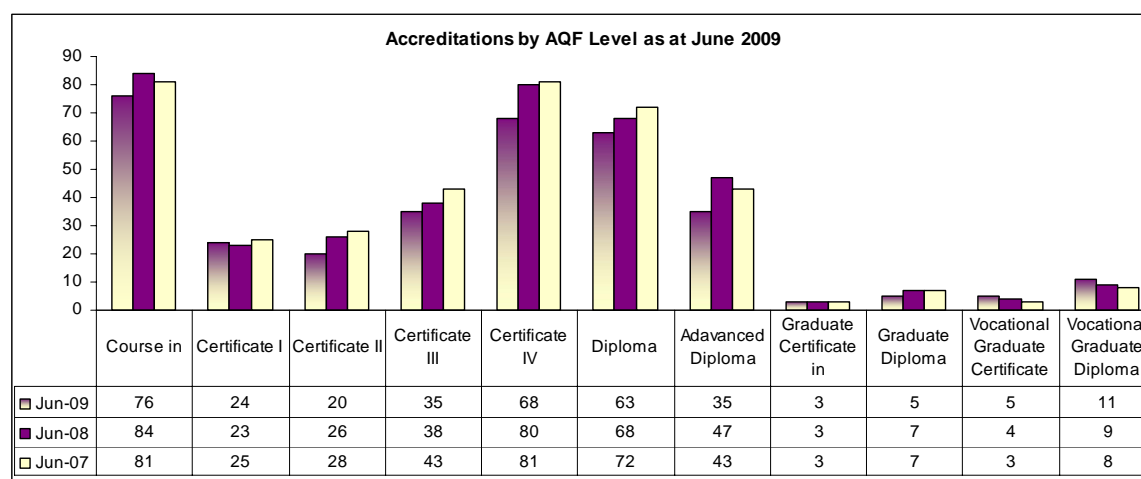
During the reporting period, the Council considered 70 proposals to extend the accreditation period of courses which would have otherwise expired. The Council considers extensions to course accreditations for a range of reasons including expectation that a Training Package qualification may replace the course in the near future or to permit an RTO reasonable changeover time from one course to another.

Table 1 and Graph 4 summarise the accreditation activity undertaken in the reporting period.

Table 1: Accreditation Activity July 2008 – June 2009

Activity	Number of Courses
Courses accredited	30
Courses re-accredited	60
Courses extended	70
Courses expired	121

Graph 4: Accreditation by AQF level July 2008 – June 2009



Graph 4 shows the number of accreditations by AQF qualification level has remained relatively unchanged compared with the previous reporting period.

RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND TRADE CERTIFICATES

One of the Council's functions under the *Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* is skills recognition. Council exercises this function to recognise skills leading to the issuance of a trade certificate in designated trade areas to successful applicants who have not undertaken an indentured Apprenticeship. Under this arrangement selected Industry Training Councils (ITCs) and RTOs provide skills assessment services for trade qualification purposes.

From July 2008 to June 2009 there were 183 trade certificates approved for issuance by the Council to individuals assessed as competent in a range of trade areas via the trade skills recognition process. This represents an increase of over 10% from the previous reporting period where a total of 164 trade certificates had been issued. The increase is most likely attributed to the change in the Department of education and Training's policy for funding skills recognition services.

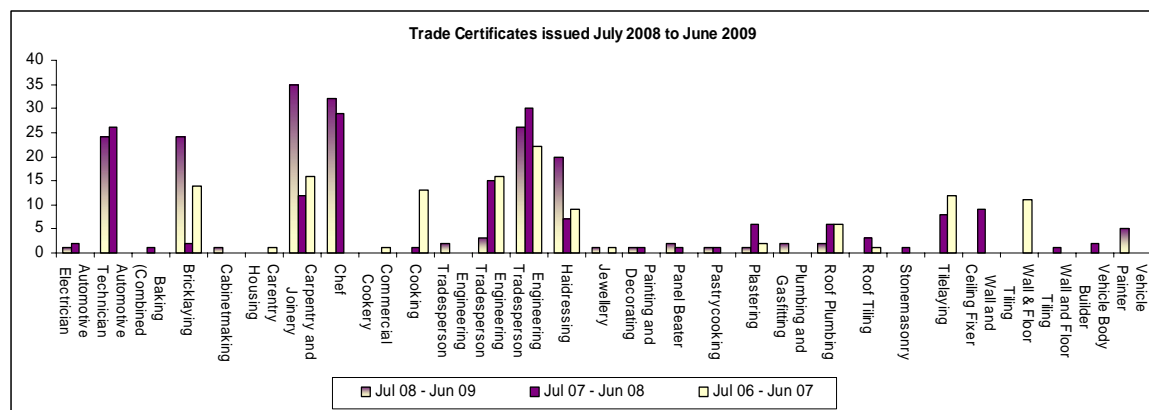
As at 30 June 2009, eight (8) RTOs and seven (7) ITCs had been endorsed by the Council as agents for trade skills recognition.

The Council reviewed and updated the *Trades Skills Recognition Policy* and endorsed the *Guideline on Skills Recognition* in October 2008 to further refine and streamline the process for training organisations seeking endorsement from the Council to deliver trade skills recognition programs.

The Council recognises that RTOs are best placed to provide trade skills recognition services and supported amendments to the VET Act for this legislative function to be transferred to RTOs.

Graph 5 provides a breakdown of the trade certificates issued by the Council during the reporting period.

Graph 5: Trade certificates issued July 2008 – June 2009



Following amendment to the VET legislation in early June 2009, RTOs will be approved to provide trade skills recognition when they apply to have the AQF aligned qualification included on their scope.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND COMPLIANCE – REGISTERING AND COURSE ACCREDITING BODY REPORTING AND INTERNAL AUDIT

The *AQTF Standards for Registering Bodies* and the *AQTF Standards for Course Accrediting Bodies* both require that each registering body and course accrediting body report annually to the National Quality Council (NQC). As part of these arrangements the Training Accreditation Council reports on its performance using national agreed qualitative and quantitative data. These reports inform the national VET sector on quality issues and the management of risks to sustainable quality outcomes.

During 2008-09, work progressed at a national level on the review of the existing indicators and development of more effective quality indicators for registering and course accrediting bodies. Work on the new quality indicators should be finalised during the 2009-10 reporting period.

The Council reported to the December 2008 meeting of the NQC on the operation of the AQTF in Western Australia for the period July – December 2007. The report addressed implementation and monitoring of the AQTF and identified emerging trends and issues related to the performance of the Council’s regulatory function in Western Australia.

The Council as both a registering body and course accrediting body is also subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic independent audit of its performance against both sets of AQTF standards as determined by the NQC. During 2008, the NQC deemed that an independent audit of State and Territory Registering Bodies and Course Accrediting Bodies compliance was not required.

The Council, as part of its ongoing commitment to review and improvement, undertook a project in November 2008 to review the implementation of the AQTF and its compliance with the Standards. The review was undertaken by the TAC Secretariat and focussed on three (3) key areas of compliance, which included:

- Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies;
- Standards for State and Territory Accrediting Bodies; and
- The suite of handbooks and guidelines introduced as part of the AQTF, including the Audit Handbook, National Guideline for Risk Management, National Guideline for Managing Non-compliance, etc.

The project involved a review of all existing Council documentation to ensure compliance, identification of gaps and the development of a strategy to implement required changes. A major component of the review included an internal audit of Council's compliance with the AQTF 2007.

In late January 2009, the Council conducted an internal audit of its compliance against the registering and course accrediting body standards. The audit was undertaken by officers from the Education and Training Regulation Directorate of the Department of Education Services, and included both the AQTF 2007 Standards for registering and accrediting bodies.

The audit identified a number of opportunities for improvement across both the registering and accreditation areas and several non-compliances against the standards for course accrediting bodies. All improvement opportunities and non-compliances were reviewed and addressed as a matter of priority within the reporting period. A review of the implementation of the changes will be undertaken during the 2009-10 reporting period.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR AUDITORS

The current panels of RTO Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers were appointed through a public tender process and commenced on 1 January 2007. The panel was appointed for a one year period with three one year extension options available.

The primary role of the auditors is to undertake audits of registered training organisations to determine compliance with the *Australian Quality Training Framework Standards 2007 Essential Standards for Registration*. Accreditation Reviewers assist the Council to evaluate submissions for accreditation to ensure that they reflect the requirements of the national standards. In addition, audits of registered training organisations may determine compliance with contracts associated with receipt of public funding for training. Auditors and Accreditation Reviewers appointed to the panel are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Panel of auditors and accreditation reviewers as at 30 June 2009

PANEL	AUDITOR	COMPANY
RTO Auditors	Steve Trice	Canington International Training
	Cherrie Hawke	Torque Holdings Pty Ltd
	Sharon Stewart	LCN Training Solutions
	Julie Large	JAL Enterprises
	Russell Docking	Skills Resource Management Systems
	Claire Werner	Applic8
	Clive Seager	Clive Seager Consulting and Training Services
	Helen McCarter	Helen McCarter Consultant
	Mairead Dempsey	Assessment Training and Research Consultancy Services
Accreditation Reviewers	Steve Trice	Canington International Training
	Russell Docking	Skills Resource Management Systems
	Cherrie Hawke	Torque Holdings Pty Ltd
	Lourdes McCleary	Lourdes McCleary

The Department, on behalf of the Council, implements a performance management model for the panel of external auditors and accreditation reviewers. Under this model, the Department provides moderation activities to ensure consistency in the approach to auditing and reviewing accreditation applications. All contracted auditors and accreditation reviewers are required to attend these moderation forums.

During the reporting period three auditor moderation forums and one accreditation reviewers forum was conducted. The forums provide auditors and reviewers with briefings and updates on state and national developments, moderation activities and the opportunity to network and develop an agreed approach for the conduct of audits and reviews.

In 2008-09, the Training Accreditation Council also provided support and professional development as part of its commitment to ensuring national consistency. During February 2009, a two day national moderation forum was held in Sydney for AQTF auditors across Australia. The forum included representatives from Western Australia. In May 2009, Western Australian AQTF auditors also participated in a national auditor exchange program.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES WITHIN THE VET SECTOR

During 2008-09, the Council continued its work on the identification of risks associated with the closure of RTOs and the development of strategies for managing those risks. The work undertaken has been in addition to the following existing policies and guidelines:

- *A Risk Management Policy for At Risk RTOs and A Joint Risk Management Policy for RTOs in Receipt of Public Funding; and*
- *Guidelines for the Protection of Fees Paid in Advance.*

In October 2008 the Council approved the development of the Client Qualifications Register (CQR), a mechanism by which the Council would establish a permanent record of student achievements from private providers.

In the event that the registration of a provider ceases through the de-registration, sale or closure of the business entity, there are several issues that arise relating to the management of student records.

The issues predominately relate to:

- the responsibility of the provider to transfer student records;
- provision of ongoing storage and access to student records; and,
- the ability to provide ongoing verification of student achievements from closed providers.

The information collected by the CQR will enable these issues to be addressed and ensure students and employers will not be disadvantaged. The CQR will provide a permanent record of student achievements with RTOs that will be accessible by students in the event that an RTO closes. It is intended that the register will also provide a source of verification for employers and contribute to reducing instances of qualifications fraud that arise when an RTO has ceased trading.

The CQR will require RTOs to report student achievements twice a year on the 30 June and 31 December. The requirement for RTOs to provide information to the CQR has been captured in the *Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009*, which came into effect in early June 2009.

Information has been provided to all RTOs on the reporting requirements and the application of the CQR. During June 2009, a series of workshops were held to provide the following information to RTOs:

- an understanding of the necessity and benefits of establishing the CQR;
- An overview of new legislative requirements; and
- the necessary knowledge and skills required to use the CQR to submit student data through a demonstration session and hands-on activities.

The general response from RTOs to the implementation of the CQR has been positive. The first reporting period will allow RTOs to upload records of existing students and upload student data from previous years. From 1 January 2010 all RTOs will be required to submit the full data set required by the Council.

FEES FOR REGISTRATION OF TRAINING PROVIDERS

In 2006, a new structure to formalise and enable future reviews of fees was approved by the Minister for Education and Training. As a result, fees for registration of training organisations are directly linked to Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases, ensuring a more consistent and equitable approach to the review of fees. As part of the new structure, fees for registration of training providers are reviewed automatically each year.

Registration fees for training organisations were last increased in 2006. As a result registration fees were reviewed and increased based on a two year CPI adjustment of 8.36%, effective 1 September 2008. Western Australia currently has one of the lowest fee structures for registration.

Table 3: Fees for registration of training providers effective 1 September 2008

Type	Current fees (as at 1 September 2008)
Application fee	\$465
Annual fee	\$465
Registration fee	\$1625 (up to 2 industry areas) \$495 for each additional area
Extension to scope of registration fees	\$995 (\$495 for each additional area)

OUTCOME 2 – The Council communicates effectively with clients and stakeholders

Outcome Indicators

The Training Accreditation Council's success in achieving Outcome 2 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicators have been achieved:

- Council's communication strategy is implemented;
- The Client Survey is reviewed to encourage clear and constructive feedback from clients; and
- Council considers feedback from clients and implements strategies for continuous improvement.

Work undertaken by the Council to progress these priorities and to achieve Outcome 2 is detailed in the following sections.

TRAINING ACCREDITATION COUNCIL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In late 2007, the Council undertook a review of its communication with its clients and stakeholders. As a result of consultations with stakeholders regarding the role of the Council, a number of strategies and opportunities were identified to improve communication and provide greater clarity on the function of the Council. As part of the overall strategy to address identified areas for improvement Council endorsed a *Communication Plan*, which has been implemented on an ongoing basis.

During 2008-09, the TAC Secretariat continued to implement the Council's *Communication Plan*, with strategies from the plan incorporated into the Department of Education Services' Education and Training Regulation Directorate's operational plan. The operational plan is subjected to a regular review process and to date a number of the strategies have already been implemented. Some of the strategies implemented during the reporting period include a regular "branded" e-newsletter and ongoing review and amendment of the Council's Website.

Another strategy completed in 2008-09 related to the presentation of Council's documents, templates and stationery to ensure a more consistent 'look'. The project provided the Council with an opportunity to have its communications reviewed by a design company which allowed for a fresh design concept to be developed. A style guide has been developed to provide advice on how the design can be consistently applied.

In addition the TAC Secretariat, on behalf of the Council, conducted stakeholder focus groups to gauge RTO feedback and identify implementation issues regarding the Client Qualifications Register. The success of the sessions and the overwhelming willingness of RTOs to be involved in the process was testament to the strong relationship that has been developed between the Council and RTOs.

EFFECTIVENESS OF COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCESS

One of the important functions provided by the Department of Education Services on behalf of the Training Accreditation Council is the investigation of complaints made by sector stakeholders. Complaints may result in registered training organisations being audited, but

most complaints are resolved through discussion with the affected parties. The management of complaints is in accordance with the Council's established policy, which is published and available on the Council's website at www.tac.wa.gov.au, and the *National Guideline for Responding to Complaints* about vocational education and training quality.

During the 2008-09 reporting period forty five (45) complaints were received by the Council, ten (10) more than for the previous reporting period. Twenty (20) of these complaints remained open and under investigation as at 30 June 2009. A high percentage of the complaints were directly related to the issuance of incorrect Qualifications and/or Statements of Attainment. While a significant portion of the remaining complaints were related to AQTF Standard 1 and more specifically assessments conducted by registered training organisations.

Table 4 shows an overview of the complaints received during the reporting period by the AQTF Standards.

Table 4: Complaints by AQTF Standards

AQTF Standard	% of complaints received
Standard 1 – the RTO provides quality training and assessment across all of its operations	33%
Standard 2 – the RTO adheres to the principles of access and equity and maximises outcomes for its clients	27%
Standard 3 – management systems are responsive to the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders, and the environment in which the RTO operates	13%

Note: Complaints lodged can be against two (2) or more AQTF Standards and/or the conditions of registration.

MEETING OF CHAIRS FROM STATE AND TERRITORY REGISTERING BODIES

The Chairs of State and Territory Registering Bodies met twice during the reporting period. The meetings were held in Darwin on 20 November 2008 and Melbourne on 25 March 2009. Agenda items discussed included:

- National Quality Arrangements for VET, including delegation of functions;
- Implementation of the AQTF standards;
- Development of Quality indicators for State and Territory Registering Bodies;
- National committees and establishment of new action groups; and
- National auditing and registration arrangements.

These meetings provide states and territories with the opportunity to discuss a range of matters relating to their functions and initiatives to ensure and promote national consistency.

During the 2008-09 reporting period, the Council also met with the State Training Board and the Minister for Training on a range of topics including Council's activities and priorities for 2008-09, national quality arrangements and developments at State level.

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 in Western Australia. It is important that clients and stakeholders are fully aware of quality assurance and recognition arrangements.

A range of activities were undertaken during the reporting period to provide information to stakeholders. These included:

PUBLICATION OF ALL DOCUMENTS ON ONE CONVENIENT CD

All documents listed on the Council's website were published to one convenient CD and is available to existing and prospective RTOs. This information also includes templates and forms to assist with the registration and accreditation process undertaken by the TAC Secretariat on behalf of the Council.

PUBLICATION OF COUNCIL NEWSLETTERS

The Council publishes an electronic newsletter, the *TAC Update*, on a monthly basis. 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.

COUNCIL WEBSITE

The website is the Council's main communication tool and as such the content for the website is regularly reviewed and refined. The content of the website focuses on the Council's core business and provides links to other organisations that provide relevant related information for its clients and stakeholders.

PARTICIPATION IN THE WA TRAINING AWARDS

Each year, Council members chair or participate on judging panels for the WA Training Awards. In addition the Council, as part of its commitment to quality and excellence, sponsors the 'Trainer of the Year Award' category of the WA Training Awards, with support from the Department of Education Services.

The WA Training Awards showcase the best in Western Australian vocational and education and training. The Awards recognise the outstanding endeavours of apprentices, trainees and vocational students, and the contribution to training made by trainers, training organisations and employers.

PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING FORUMS

In May 2009, the Department of Education Services, on behalf of the Council, provided an information stand at the Training Forum conducted by the Department of Education and Training. The Training Forum provides a key professional development opportunity for VET practitioners and the information stand enables training organisations to access up to date information on registration related matters and the VET sector.

RTONET

RTONet is an electronic system managed by the Department of Education and Training, which provides RTOs with direct access to information linked to their registration.

Registered training organisations can view their registration details with the Council including their contact details, scope of registration and delivery profile. RTOs can also submit applications for registration on-line via *RTONet* and view qualification/course details and the Training Records System for Traineeships and Apprenticeships. *RTONet* has proved a successful resource for registered training organisations in monitoring their registration activities.

SUPPORT PRODUCTS

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

WORKSHOPS FOR RTOs

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:

REGISTRATION INFORMATION SESSIONS

During the 2008-09 reporting period, the TAC Secretariat provided 114 free one on one information sessions to organisations and individuals considering becoming RTOs. These sessions provided an overview of the opportunities and responsibilities associated with being an RTO under the AQTF and the process for registration. The sessions helped organisations consider all available options and make an informed decision in relation to becoming an RTO.

The structure of the sessions was largely participant driven, with information based on the requirements of the organisation or individual. The sessions were flexible and aimed to provide the participant with the information required to continue on their chosen path. Key areas discussed include:

- National Skills Framework
- Rights and Responsibilities of RTOs
- Alternatives to Registration
- The Registration Process
 - The application process (incl. Self Assessment)
 - The audit process
- Course Accreditation (where appropriate)
- Where to from Here?

Feedback from the information sessions has been positive, with the flexible and individualised approach appreciated by participants.

OTHER RTO WORKSHOPS

The TAC secretariat on behalf of the Council also delivers workshops which focus specifically on the registration standards and assisting organisations understand the audit process. The TAC Secretariat is currently reviewing the content and delivery style of the *Registration Standards workshop* and the *Help – the AQTF Auditor is Coming!* workshop to ensure that the information provided is accurate and delivered through the most appropriate medium.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINING ORGANISATIONS

To assist the Council, the Department of Education and Training provides a range of professional development opportunities for practitioners within the VET sector in Western Australia. The development opportunities consist of three categories and include:

- VET Sector workshops – provide a variety of information sessions and workshops relating to the VET sector;
- Practitioner workshops – which are designed to develop and enhance the training and assessment skills of VET practitioners; and
- Technologies workshops – provides participants with training in the use of a variety of E-Learning tools to assist with training and assessment.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE

The website is the public face of the Training Accreditation Council, its policies, processes and functions; and the operations of the TAC Secretariat. The website is a source of reference for training organisations on a range of topics including registration; the AQTF; accreditation of courses; the audit process; and a point of reference for other VET related matters.

The website is now the centrepiece of the Council's communication strategy and provides the most up to date information about the operation of the Council. The main users of the website are RTOs or prospective RTOs and as such, the website provides content that best meets their needs.

The Council's website has received positive feedback from a range of stakeholders who have confirmed that the interface provides them with the information they want when they need it.

OUTCOME 3 – The Council effectively engages with relevant industry bodies

Outcome Indicators

The Training Accreditation Council's success in achieving Outcome 3 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicators have been achieved:

- The Council engages with industry in the audit process; and
- The Council develops mutually beneficial working arrangements with other regulatory bodies.

Work undertaken by the Council to progress these priorities and to achieve Outcome 3 is detailed in the following sections.

CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

During 2008-09, the Council actively consulted with a range of stakeholders including government departments, industry training councils, registered training organisations, TAFEWA Managing Directors, peak bodies and professional bodies. Discussions focused on various training related issues and ensuring stakeholders were aware of the Council's requirements and priorities with respect to the quality assurance and recognition of vocational education and training in Western Australia.

This year the Council's consultative processes focused on the continued implementation of the AQTF, RTO Quality Indicators, the Client Qualifications Register, requirements for Trade Skills Recognition, delegation of Council's functions and service provision. As a result the Council focused on ensuring stakeholders were provided with relevant information on registration and accreditation requirements.

Organisations Council consulted with include: the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET), the Training and Development Association (TADA), Electrical Utilities and Public Administration Training Council Inc; the Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council; TVET Australia; the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

NATIONAL CONSISTENCY OF THE AUSTRALIAN QUALITY TRAINING FRAMEWORK

During 2008-09, the Training Accreditation Council continued to work collaboratively with the Australian government and State and Territory governments in the regulation of the VET sector:

- **Regulation of VET sector and national consistency** – During 2008, the Department has been an active member of the National Registration and Accreditation Technical Committee (NRATC) to ensure consistency in application and monitoring of the standards and outcomes based auditing across jurisdictions. In November 2008, the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) agreed to new working arrangements which have impacted on the operation of the National Quality Council (NQC). As a result the NQC has adopted an action group model rather the established standing sub-committees. NQC has abolished the existing network of sub-

committees such as NRATC and established four action groups, including the National Consistency Action Group of which the Department is a member. The National Consistency Action Group has an outcomes focus and has been established to achieve a nationally consistent application of quality assurance arrangements for the national training system through the AQTF.

- **National accreditation standards and guidelines** - the Department is a member of the AQTF Course Accrediting Bodies network. The network consisted of representatives from all state and territory accrediting bodies and met twice (2) during the year to discuss consistency in the interpretation of the standards and accreditation issues impacting other jurisdictions.
- **National complaints benchmarking working group** - during the 2008-09 reporting period representatives from the Department attended two (2) national complaints benchmarking workshops. The workshops were attended by representatives from all state and territories, and focussed on improving existing complaints processes and guidelines to achieve national consistency across all jurisdictions.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AQTF 2007 QUALITY INDICATORS

As part of the implementation of the AQTF 2007 Quality Indicators the TAC Secretariat, on behalf of the Council, participated in a number of workshops with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to provide information to RTOs on the Quality Indicators. ACER were appointed by the Australian Government to undertake development workshops to help RTOs gain a better understanding of the Quality Indicators, associated instruments and collection systems. A total of six (6) workshops were held in Perth in late March 2009, with over 400 participants representing 250 RTOs attending the information sessions.

The AQTF 2007 Quality Indicators form part of the AQTF 2007 *Essential Standards for Registration*. The AQTF 2007 Quality Indicators have been designed to help RTOs conduct evidence-based and outcomes-focused continuous quality improvement and assist Registering Bodies to assess the risk of an RTO's operations.

Under the AQTF, RTOs are required to collect and use data on three quality indicators which have been endorsed by the National Quality Council (NQC):

- Learner Engagement
- Employer Satisfaction
- Competency Completion

The NQC has agreed that 2009 will be a transitional year for implementation of the Quality Indicators. RTOs will only be required to report on the competency completion indicator for 2008 activity by 1 July 2009. RTOs will be required to report on all three Quality Indicators for 2009 activity on 1 July 2010.

STREAMLINING REGULATION THROUGH IMPROVED LINKAGES BETWEEN LICENSING BODIES AND VET REGULATORS

In line with the *National Guideline for Industry Regulator Engagement*, the Training Accreditation Council has been engaging with key industry regulatory bodies to ensure that they can be confident that the training and assessment practices of RTOs adequately address their regulatory requirements. Improving the alignment between occupational licensing and

training systems has been identified as a key priority in occupational licensing reform at a national level.

The engagement process with each industry regulator is based on the protocols of consultation, information sharing and contribution of resources. The arrangements for ongoing engagement are determined by the requirements of the specific industry regulator including strategies for involving the industry regulator in the audit process.

Consultations have been undertaken with a range of key regulatory bodies in Western Australia over the last two years, organisations consulted include: WorkSafe; Office of Energy; WA Police, Licensing Enforcement Division; Maritime Safety Authority; the Plumbers Licensing Board; the Hairdressers' Registration Board; the Builders' Registration Board; and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure and Department of Transport's Passenger Services and Licensing Divisions.

OUTCOME 4 – The Council’s clients are satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by the Council

Outcome Indicators

The Training Accreditation Council’s success in achieving Outcome 4 is demonstrated by the extent to which the following indicators have been achieved:

- Feedback from clients through surveys, focus groups, workshops etc. reflect satisfaction with the Council’s services; and
- Suggested improvements are acted on where relevant.

Work undertaken by the Council to achieve Outcome 4 is detailed in the following sections.

FEEDBACK FROM RTOS

The Council collects feedback from registered training organisations following completion of audits during the initial and renewal of registration process. The feedback is incorporated into the Council’s continuous improvement processes and is reported on a biannual basis. In November 2008 the TAC Secretariat, as a result of client feedback and as part of its focus on review and improvement, implemented an on-line survey facility for training organisations. The on-line survey facility compliments the existing survey process.

During the 2008-09 reporting period, the survey results showed that 92% of respondents found that the audit process added value to their business. This represents no change from 2007-08. In addition, 94% of respondents indicated that the pre-audit information provided by the registering body met their needs.

In addition to the ongoing survey of training organisations, a broader survey of the education and training sector was undertaken by the Department of Education Services in mid 2008. The survey focussed on the level of service provided by the Department’s Education and Training Regulation branch, including the TAC Secretariat. The survey was sent electronically to over 540 providers in the VET, higher education and international education sectors. The survey sample also included a number of organisations who operated across two (2) or more sectors. Each organisation was asked a series of questions relating to level of service and satisfaction.

Overall, the responses were positive and indicated high levels of satisfaction and agreement with the services provided, with 90% of respondents indicating that for the key function of registering providers the Department performed very well. 85% of the respondents indicated the Department performed the function of accrediting courses very well. Respondents rated the level of satisfaction with audit / authorisation processes adopted by the Department at 84%.

Results from the survey will be incorporated within the Department’s review and improvement process, and work has already commenced to develop strategies to implement improvements identified from the survey.

CLIENT QUALIFICATION REGISTER - FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK AND INFORMATION WORKSHOPS FOR RTOS

In late 2008, Council approved the development of the Client Qualifications Register (CQR), a mechanism by which the Council would establish a permanent record of student achievements from private providers. As part of the development process two (2) focus groups were held on 12 November 2008, with twelve (12) RTOs attending each of the sessions to gain information on a variety of issues associated with the implementation and ongoing administration of the CQR.

RTOs that were invited to participate in the focus group were selected on the basis of their size and whether they received public funding. This ensured that there was representation from a wide cross section of RTOs.

Overall the response to the concept of the CQR was very positive, with all RTOs who attended acknowledging that they supported the concept of the register and recognising the need for its development. The TAC Secretariat incorporated feedback obtained from the focus groups into the design of the CQR to ensure that it meets the needs of RTOs.

In June 2009, as part of the implementation strategy for the CQR information was provided to all RTOs on the reporting requirements and the application of the CQR. In addition, RTOs were invited to attend a series of workshops on the CQR requirements.

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 *AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory 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.

Apprenticeship/traineeship means a structured training arrangement for a person employed under an apprenticeship/traineeship training contract. It usually involves the person receiving training and being assessed both on and off the job.

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 of a Training Package or by the learning outcomes of an accredited course.

Audit means a planned, systematic and documented process used to assess an RTO's compliance with the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration*. State and Territory registering bodies conduct independent audits as a condition of registration. RTOs can conduct internal audits to assess their compliance with the standards and their own policies and procedures as part of their continuous improvement process.

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 and training in Australia. The AQF comprises titles and guidelines that define each qualification, as well as the principles and protocols covering cross-sectoral qualification links and the issuing of qualifications and statements of attainment.

Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) means a set of nationally agreed quality assurance arrangements for training and assessment services delivered by training organisations.

Complaints process means a process by which a client of an RTO, or other interested parties, may raise a concern about the RTO's policies, procedures, services or products with a view to having them changed and improved.

Course accrediting body means the authority responsible, under the VET legislation and decision-making framework of a particular State or Territory, for accrediting courses for delivery both inside and outside Australia.

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

National Quality Council (NQC) means a committee of the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education. The NQC has a role in:

- (a) providing the Ministerial Council with advice on the operation of the AQTF 2007 and any changes to it that are considered necessary.
- (b) providing the State and Territory registering and course-accrediting bodies with information and advice on implementation of the AQTF 2007.
- (c) providing the Ministerial Council with information and advice on the operation of the AQTF 2007 in each state and territory, including advice on their registration, audit and related processes, and on the Commonwealth processes that support the AQTF 2007.

National recognition applies nationally and means:

- (a) The recognition by an RTO of the AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by other RTOs, thereby enabling national recognition of the qualifications and statements of attainment issued to any person.
- (b) The recognition by each State and Territory's registering body of the training organisations registered by any other States or Territory's registering body and of its registration decisions.
- (c) The recognition by all state and territory course accrediting bodies and registering bodies of the courses accredited by each State or Territory's course-accrediting body and of its accreditation decisions.

National Skills Framework (NSF) means the system of VET that:

- (a) applies nationally
- (b) is endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education.

National Training Information Service (NTIS) means the national register for recording information about RTOs, Training Packages and accredited courses. NTIS is part of the National Skills Framework.

Registering body means the authority responsible, under the VET legislation and decision-making framework of a particular State and Territory, and in accordance with the *AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies*, for registering training organisations, including all the processes relating to registration and the imposition of sanctions on RTOs.

Registration means the formal recognition by a State or Territory registering body, in accordance with the *AQTF 2007 Standards for State and Territory Registering Bodies*, that a

training organisation meets the requirements of the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration*. A training organisation must be registered in order to deliver and assess nationally recognised training and issue nationally recognised qualifications.

Registered Training Organisation (RTO) means a training organisation registered by a State or Territory registering body in accordance with the *AQTF 2007 Essential Standards for Registration* within a defined scope of registration. A training organisation must be registered in order to deliver and assess nationally recognised training and issue nationally recognised qualifications.

Scope of registration means the particular services and products an RTO is registered to provide. The RTO's scope defines the specific AQF qualifications, units of competency and accredited courses it is registered to provide, and whether it is registered to provide:

- (a) both training delivery and assessment services, and to issue the relevant AQF qualifications and statements of attainment, or
- (b) only assessment services, and to issue AQF qualifications and statements of attainment.

Statement of Attainment means a formal certification in the VET sector by an RTO that a person has achieved:

- (a) part of an AQF qualification, or
- (b) one or more units of competency from a nationally endorsed Training Package, or
- (c) all the units of competency or modules comprising an accredited short course (meaning an accredited course that does not meet the requirements for a full AQF qualification).

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 Package means a nationally endorsed, integrated set of competency standards, assessment guidelines and AQF qualifications for a specific industry, industry sector or enterprise.

Training products means Training Packages qualifications and accredited courses.

APPENDIX 2 – Acronyms

AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
AQTF 2007	Australian Quality Training Framework 2007
ITC	Industry Training Council
NQC	National Quality Council
NSF	National Skills Framework
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
TAC	Training Accreditation Council
VET	Vocational Education and Training