

Outcomes: Tourism and Hospitality Industry Workforce Development Forums



May 2009
Outcomes: Tourism and Hospitality Industry
Workforce Development Forums

OUTCOMES: TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FORUMS

REPORT TO SERVICE SKILLS AUSTRALIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report outlines the views of the Australian tourism and hospitality industry regarding the vocational education and training (VET) system, and is based on the input of industry leaders at a series of Forums conducted nationally in March-April 2009. This process was commissioned by Service Skills Australia on behalf of its Tourism and Hospitality Industry Advisory Committee.

This consultative process was built around *Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy*, launched by Service Skills Australia in early 2009 with broad industry endorsement. The Strategy outlines four Priority Areas for the industry in developing its workforce:

1. A Highly Skilled Workforce
2. Expanding the Traditional Workforce
3. Access to Quality Workplaces
4. Better Workforce Planning.

The agenda of each Forum was structured around these four Priority Areas, with a core focus on *Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce*, given its direct relevance to the VET system. Three and a half hour Forums were conducted in each capital city between 27 March and 22 April 2009, with invitees including industry associations, major operators, state/territory Tourism Industry Councils, sector-relevant unions and state/territory ITAB representatives.

A number of key National Findings and Conclusions have been drawn from the Forums, with areas of broad concern including:

- A lack of appropriate industry focus of the VET system and of some training organisations.
- Training conduct which may mislead and potentially disillusion tourism and hospitality students.
- A lack of industry confidence in the training system.
- The need to train and educate employers about the VET system.
- The need to improve the tourism and hospitality industry's engagement with, and trust in, the VET system through industry ownership of the assessment method.

Through the correlation of the "Top 5" issues of concern identified within each Forum, six key areas requiring attention become apparent:

1. The training assessment process, with appropriate resourcing, should be transferred away from training organisations, to the ownership of the industry.
2. The relative employment demand of the tourism and hospitality industry must be recognised through better funding of training places.
3. A concerted multi-stakeholder approach to promotion of the tourism and hospitality industry should be implemented.
4. Industry knowledge of the availability and value of training must be improved.
5. Training outcomes and relevance should be improved through flexible and innovative delivery.
6. RTOs must be more responsive and accountable to industry, and training and assessment must reflect workplace realities.

Consideration is given to issues of concern which are specific to single state or territories. A series of recommendations focuses on the importance of ensuring the leveraging of the material in this Report to the greatest good of the tourism and hospitality industry, through its widespread dissemination and use at the core of a national advocacy program. Attachments to the Report summarise the outcomes of each individual Forum, and show the PowerPoint presentation framework used to guide the process.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This Report provides an overview of the ideas, views and concerns of the Australian tourism and hospitality industry about the vocational education and training (VET) system, with a specific focus on how the VET system serves the industry's workforce development needs.

It is based on the input of tourism and hospitality industry leaders presented at a series of Forums conducted in each state and territory in March and April 2009, by Service Skills Australia.

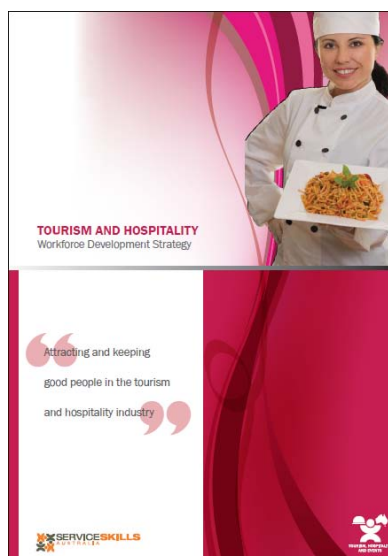
Service Skills Australia is the national industry skills council covering the tourism and hospitality industry. Service Skills Australia is a not-for-profit, independent organisation, consulting and engaging with industry, training organisations, government and other stakeholders to develop and support the implementation of nationally recognised training products that respond to industry skill needs.

Service Skills Australia it is one of 11 industry skills councils funded by the Australian Government to support skills development, and covers a range of industry sectors including retail and wholesale, sport, fitness, community recreation, outdoor recreation, caravans, hairdressing, beauty, floristry, community pharmacy and funeral services, as well as tourism and hospitality.

The **Tourism and Hospitality Industry Advisory Committee (IAC)** is one of 3 IAC's within Service Skills Australia, providing industry intelligence and advice on the skills needs, directions and significant trends within their industry sectors. The Tourism and Hospitality IAC includes representatives from peak industry associations, unions and large and small enterprises.

Service Skills Australia defines its role in workforce development as being:

to facilitate partnerships between employers, employees, unions and training organisations to ensure the vocational education and training system supports and meets the needs of our industries. That is, to have access to the right people, with the right skills at the right time.



As part of this role, Service Skills Australia (through the Tourism and Hospitality IAC) facilitated the development of the ***Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy*** which was publicly released in February 2009.

The importance of the ***Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy*** is described, in part, in the introduction to the document by John Hart and John Sweetman, the Co-Chairs of Tourism and Hospitality IAC:

The tourism and hospitality industry is forecast to experience continued strong growth in the years to come. To support the industry's success, and facilitate this projected growth, industry must work together to ensure we have access to suitable skilled labour. Appropriately skilled, quality personnel are integral to the success of business in any industry, and can provide a competitive advantage.

Customers already expect high levels service from our businesses. This means that industry must find innovative and flexible ways to manage our existing and future staff. It will require looking beyond traditional methods and sources to attract and retain staff.

This Workforce Development Strategy is an important step in continuing to address the skills and labour shortages in the tourism and hospitality industry. The document represents a commitment from industry to work together. It is a way for industry to articulate their vision for workforce development.

The *Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy* (“the Strategy”) was endorsed by all key organisations in the sector and is accessible online at:

http://www.serviceskills.com.au/dmdocuments/Publications/thedevstrat_web.pdf

The Strategy’s Aim:

People working across tourism and hospitality will be appropriately skilled and able, through the application of their expertise, to contribute to the growth and development of a sustainable, productive and profitable tourism and hospitality industry.

encapsulates its five Goals:

- i. There are enough people to do the work required, to the standard required, to consistently deliver a world-class visitor experience.*
- ii. The people who work in the tourism and hospitality industry have appropriate skills and the personal attributes to deliver a quality experience. There are education and training systems in place to recognise and deliver the skills and knowledge required to resource the tourism and hospitality industry.*
- iii. People with experience and expertise are retained within the tourism and hospitality sector because they have opportunities to grow and build satisfying careers.*
- iv. Businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector have the right information, management systems and processes in place to maximise the contribution of their people.*
- v. The tourism and hospitality industry has the structures and mechanisms in place to address its future workforce and skill needs on an ongoing basis.*

The Strategy then outlines four “Priority Areas” for achieving these Goals, each with a number of “Focus Areas” informing specific strategic approaches:

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system.

Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills.

Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways.

Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills.

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

Focus Area 1: People currently not in workforce and welfare to work targeted groups.

Focus Area 2: Engaging Indigenous workers.

Focus Area 3: Managing the generational change: young people, existing and mature age workers.

Focus Area 4: Using overseas workers.

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

Focus Area 1: Improved attraction and recruitment.

Focus Area 2: Enhanced retention strategies.

Focus Area 3: Flexible work practices and employment arrangements.

Focus Area 4: Improving industry image and the provision of career pathways.

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

Focus Area 1: Better information and analyses of data at a regional level.

Focus Area 2: Destination management planning and labour force mapping to assist workforce planning.

Focus Area 3: Provide high quality workforce information, tools and services.

As the Strategy neared completion and launch, Service Skills Australia prepared an outline for multi-sector follow up project with three objectives:

1. To hold conversations with state industry representatives to describe and articulate the service industry's skill and workforce development needs.
2. To influence (on the basis of these conversations) state training policy in order to support the workforce development needs of the service industries.
3. To develop (on the basis of the first two points) agreements with each state jurisdiction (in partnership with the state ITABs) that articulates the needs of industry and a commitment to supporting these.

At this stage, the project deliverables were described as:

- Conduct an Industry Workforce Development Forum in each jurisdiction and for each industry sector listed above.
- Prepare sector specific reports detailing the findings of these consultations, including industry workforce development and skill requirements.
- Develop sector specific workforce development strategies where required.
- Review relevant state based training policy, produce a set of recommendations, and establish an agreement with each state training authority for their support.

The Tourism and Hospitality component of this multi-industry project was discussed by Service Skills with Peter Olah, Managing Director, Moebius Consulting, who was commissioned to undertake this component for Service Skills.

The minimum deliverables of the Tourism and Hospitality project were to be:

- A Tourism and Hospitality Industry Workforce Development Forum in each jurisdiction (in other words, in each state and territory capital).
- A detailed report detailing the findings of these consultations, with appropriate recommendations (the Forums within each jurisdiction having been successfully completed, this document is that report).

Follow up of the final report, and subsequent meetings and agreements with state training authorities (as envisaged in the original project scope) were not included in the brief for this initial project component.

METHODOLOGY

Early in this project's life, it was agreed that the Tourism and Hospitality Industry Workforce Development Forums would be limited to a half-day session with a limit of twenty attendees at each, in order to encourage attendance and maximise the opportunity for participation by attendees.

The Forum invitation lists, prepared by Service Skills Australia, included industry associations, major operators, state/territory Tourism Industry Councils, sector-relevant unions and state/territory ITAB representatives (or equivalent where available). Whilst Forum invitations were issued and managed by Service Skills Australia, cooperative efforts were undertaken by key Service Skills Australia staff and the project consultant to maximise the desired representation at each Forum. The assistance of a number of state training authorities and industry associations in this regard is especially noteworthy.

Service Skills staff undertook all project administration, including the preparation and distribution of materials, travel and venue bookings, and scribing of Forum proceedings.

The preparation of the guiding PowerPoint presentation for the Forums was undertaken by the project consultant with close assistance from Service Skills Australia management. The presentation was produced in a "modular master" format, allowing it to be quickly shortened and localised for each Forum. A copy of the master presentation is at **Attachment 9** of this report.

The eight Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Forums were delivered in an open participatory format, guided by the PowerPoint presentation. Each Forum was facilitated by Peter Olah, the project consultant, and scribed by a Service Skills Australia staff member. Each Forum commenced at 9.30am local time, and ran to approximately 1.00pm. The dates and venues of the Forums were:

TABLE 1: FORUM DATES AND VENUES

FORUM	DATE	VENUE
Darwin	Friday, 27 March 2009	Holiday Inn, Esplanade Darwin
Hobart	Monday, 30 March 2009	Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart
Adelaide	Tuesday, 31 March 2009	Holiday Inn, Adelaide
Brisbane	Thursday, 2 April 2009	Holiday Inn, Brisbane
Melbourne	Monday, 6 April 2009	Holiday Inn, Flinders Melbourne
Canberra	Wednesday, 8 April 2009	Crowne Plaza, Canberra
Sydney	Thursday, 9 April 2009	Regus, Alfred Street Sydney
Perth	Wednesday, 22 April 2009	Holiday Inn, Perth City Centre

Each Forum's agenda (supported by the presentation) was built around the structure of the *Workforce Development Strategy*:

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FORUM AGENDA

- 1. Opening**
 - Introductions
 - Current situation – recent Federal announcements
 - Setting the scene – key objectives for industry

- 2. Overview Of Tourism And Hospitality Workforce Development Strategy**

- 3. A Highly Skilled Workforce**
 - Key issues for the state/territory
 - Opportunities and existing strategies

- 4. Expanding The Traditional Workforce**
 - Key issues for the state/territory
 - Opportunities and existing strategies

- 5. Access To Quality Workplaces**
 - Key issues for the state/territory
 - Opportunities and existing strategies

- 6. Better Workforce Planning**
 - Key issues for the state/territory
 - Opportunities and existing strategies

- 7. Open Discussion and Questions**

The position put to Forum participants was that the *Workforce Development Strategy* is the national industry position, agreed by all peak organisations, and therefore the target position for the industry across the country. The question for the participants was how this translates in each state and territory.

The aim of each Forum was defined as conducting a gap analysis - what needs improvement in the VET system to meet the industry's national workforce development standard.

Unsurprisingly, the most significant focus of discussion at every Forum was on Agenda Item 3 (A Highly Skilled Workforce) which correlates to Priority Area 1 of the Strategy. Clearly, this Agenda Item is of most direct relevance to any discussion of the VET system and therefore demanded the most detailed attention from Forum participants. This focus is evident in the summary notes of each Forum, arranged chronologically at ***Attachment 1*** to ***Attachment 8*** of this report. These notes are a direct reflection of participant discussion and comment at each Forum, and also highlight the diverse attendance throughout the Forum series.

NATIONAL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The key outcome focus for this project has been to identify, group and report on national issues, concerns and trends within the tourism and hospitality industry in relationship to the VET system.

To do so has entailed structuring the summary notes of each Forum (see *Attachment 1* to *Attachment 8* of this report) in a way which reflects the structure of the *Workforce Development Strategy*. Obviously, a free flowing open Forum does not operate with such a structured process, necessitating some re-ordering of Forum outcomes. It must be stressed that this has not involved editing or censoring of participant input in any way.

What follows here is a reporting, in this same format, of the key national issues as identified through the process. National issues have been defined as those which were identified, with some degree of consistency of language and approach, in more than three states or territories.

As mentioned above, the input of participants at each Forum focused strongly on those issues related to Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce (and especially Focus Area 1: Creating a More Responsive Training and Learning System). This industry focus was not unusual, given that these sections relate most clearly to VET and other educational issues, and is reflected throughout this section.

PRIORITY AREA 1: A HIGHLY SKILLED WORKFORCE

FOCUS AREA 1: CREATING A MORE RESPONSIVE TRAINING AND LEARNING SYSTEM

TRAINING

There was very widespread concern over a **lack of appropriate industry focus** of the VET system, and especially of some training organisations. This was described as being manifested in a number of ways:

- Competency based courses without sufficient workplace based experience for trainees
- An increasing classroom, as opposed to workplace, focus
- Gaps in core technical skills in graduates, or outdated skills
- A lack of industry practitioner involvement in classroom training
- People with qualifications proving not competent in the job
- A need to retrain graduates in the workplace
- A disconnect between school and workplace
- Lack of industry input into the curriculum (with SMEs especially not linked in)
- A focus on ever-greater formal qualifications and away from skill sets.

(There are) lots of tired, old lecturers...

WA Forum Participant

Most states and territories reported a perception of a **lack of flexibility** in both the training system and training delivery. Concerns cited included training which is too focused on the nominal hours of training and experience, rather than actual skills, and training offerings which emphasise “9 to 5” classroom learning, not real-world business hours in tourism and hospitality.

A number of Forums expressed a concern that this industry/training disconnect was **misleading (and potentially disillusioning) tourism and hospitality students**. Examples of this include:

- Trainee misconceptions about the real world nature of the jobs for which they are qualified (with commercial cookery often cited as an example of a job with an unrealistic graduate expectations)
- A misfit between the graduate’s perception of their qualification value and their expected work level, and the workplace actuality (with graduate expectations often too high for entry-level tasks)
- A finding by smaller tourism and hospitality businesses that some TAFE graduates have an unrealistic opinion of their skill levels
- The focus by private RTOs on international students, despite the fact that many cannot be placed for practical experience due to language and/or cultural issues
- Qualifications leading to an increase in payrate, without commensurate experience or productivity.

A number of Forums expressed concerns about the high drop out or non completion rates in tourism and hospitality courses. There was also a commonly expressed concern that the recommendations of the *Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education* (“Bradley Review”) may tend to further remove the VET system from its industry base.

Ultimately, this combination of factors has led to what was generally agreed to be **a lack of industry confidence in the training system**.

A number of suggestions for overcoming this gap between industry and trainers were identified consistently:

- Making on-the-job training and assessment the focus
- Ensuring that trainers have relevant qualifications and experience in the skills being trained
- Ensuring that trainers are business-savvy and consistent
- Ensuring that training organisations have the business acumen to understand the employer’s commercial interests
- Speeding up the response of training organisations to changes in industry needs
- Considering a pre-qualification process for students in some courses.

However, the feeling of the industry was best summed up in this comment by a Forum participant:

The (tourism and hospitality) industry can’t control the quality of training, but we can do something about the quality of assessment

Put simply, the strong feeling across all Forums was that the quality outcomes of the VET training process would be best ensured not by an attempt to control or validate the training itself, but rather through a strong industry voice in (or indeed outright control of) the assessment of training outcomes. There is more on this issue under the “Assessment” heading below.

INDUSTRY ROLE

It was agreed across most forums that there exists a **need to train and educate employers about the VET system**. As it stands currently:

- Much of the industry doesn't recognise most tourism and hospitality qualifications (especially amongst SMEs)
- Many employers don't look for qualifications, they look for experience, then train in-house
- Employers are looking to non-accredited courses
- There is a lack of employer awareness about available options for flexible delivery
- The industry does not understand the training package
- Many employers avoid training staff as they fear that employees will leave
- There are concerns regarding the capacity of many employers and managers to mentor and train
- Many employers, especially SMEs, have little objective knowledge upon which to base an informed purchasing decision for training.

What if you train them and they leave?

Anonymous

What if you don't train them and they stay?

NSW Forum Participant

It was felt that there is a demonstrated need to show tourism and hospitality employers the value of training in general terms, and to specifically educate employers about industry training packages and options. This will require strong leadership and communication from within the industry.

Amongst the ideas for improvement raised in several jurisdictions were:

- The development of a national "pre-qualification" for business owners prior to undertaking staff training
- Group training schemes with a greater focus on, and business/funding structure supportive of, engagement with SMEs
- Programs aimed at growing employer commitment to providing in-workplace training and assessment
- Mechanisms to reduce the direct cost of training to small employers.

ASSESSMENT

It was agreed very broadly that it is no longer acceptable to have RTO trainers also acting as assessors of training outcomes. This situation was compared, on more than one occasion, to "being both a player and scorekeeper".

Ultimately it was felt (and on this point there was broader national convergence than any other issue) that **industry ownership of the assessment process would be the single best option for improving the tourism and hospitality industry's engagement with, and trust in, the VET system**.

This was felt to be a better, more feasible option than an attempt to exert direct industry control over a market-based training system. Naturally, any such transfer of authority and responsibility for assessment of industry training outcomes must also be matched with the transfer of appropriate resources and funding.

As stated by one Forum attendee:

The system is all about industry qualifications, so shouldn't assessment be by the industry?

Whilst there was significant discussion of alternate mechanisms to improve the clarity and transparency of training outcomes, such as a “League Ladder” or Star Ratings scheme for training providers, there was no consistency of support for any such approach.

FUNDING

Whilst a number of states and territories reported issues with the quantum of funding for tourism and hospitality training places, this was not a fully nationally consistent issue. Indeed, some states expressed the concern that the industry had not been in a position to take up all the funded places available to it.

However, a number of funding-related concerns were consistently reported:

- As many training providers get paid based on student hours there is a financial incentive to mark students as present, and pass them as competent, for courses which they may not be attending
- As funding currently resides with the training organisation, the input into training delivery by both employer and trainee is necessarily limited
- There is a perception that some training organisations direct students away from resource-intensive tourism and hospitality places and towards more profitable courses.

Suggested solutions to these issues included the consideration of a variable funding model based upon the resource intensiveness of courses (taking into account the higher costs in some courses for commercial equipment, as one example). There was also a suggestion to re-examine the provision of direct financial benefits to employers and employees to increase the uptake of training.

There were significant concerns expressed regarding the Bradley Review’s recommendation of a more demand-driven, student entitlement system which places more choice in the hands of the students, by *providing students with increased opportunities to decide for themselves what and where they will study through an entitlement* (Recommendation 25). Concerns about this proposal included the possibility that:

- Training providers would focus on marketing the most profitable programs to potential students, rather than the quality of training
- Dropouts would increase as students exercised the power inherent in their spending decision
- Students would often not make an informed choice based on objective data
- Student choices would rarely reflect industry requirements directly
- Many students would select “sexy” courses such as events management, without reference to actual industry need or career options
- Vouchers would lead to a lack of industry input in relation to demand.

Most of the Forums agreed that this Bradley Review recommendation and any consideration of its further application to VET should be opposed by the tourism and hospitality industry.

STATE AGENCIES

The impact of state training agencies upon tourism and hospitality training outcomes was not an area in which consistent, national concerns were expressed.

There was some consistency of support for the utilisation of skills councils as an industry support mechanism and to advocate for industry-desired training outcomes, as well as to identify and propagate good practice in training for the industry.

DATA

Whilst the quality of data was an issue of some concern in each state and territory, there were few data gaps consistently identified across several jurisdictions. Amongst those so identified was the need for:

- Consolidated and timely labour force data including turnover rate, time to recruit, retention periods, for the entire industry at both state and regional levels
- Information about the availability of suitable workers within regional/local markets
- A greater sharing of operational data within the industry
- More data on regional lines.

FOCUS AREA 2: BETTER RECOGNITION OF LEARNING AND SKILLS

It was broadly agreed that Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a desirable and potentially powerful tool in an industry such as tourism and hospitality, where the relatively recent emergence of formal industry qualifications has left many highly skilled industry practitioners without formal recognition of their skills and knowledge.

It was felt that the increased use of RPL, especially to formally qualify experienced industry decision-makers, may also lead to greater industry support for those qualifications. However, it was recognised that there are a number of weaknesses in the current RPL structure, including:

- A lack of industry awareness of RPL
- Concerns regarding the definition of RPL: it should be recognising current skills not “prior learning”
- Evidence gathering requirements for RPL are highly onerous, due to this “learning” focus
- RPL is too difficult: there are too many barriers
- RPL needs to be more accessible to employers: currently it is too daunting
- There is a lack of trust amongst parts of the industry in the RPL process, due to flawed RPLs undertaken by some RTOs.

Suggestions for potential remedies which appeared consistently included:

- The restructuring of RPL as a “Skills Recognition Program”, rather than learning recognition
- Fostering the conduct of RPL assessments in the workplace
- Development of a pre-assessment process for RPL to make it less onerous and daunting for employers
- Development of examples of, and promotion of, good assessment practice including holistic and integrated assessment.

FOCUS AREA 3: ACCELERATED PATHWAYS

This was not an area of significant focus for most Forums. It was felt by several jurisdictions that whilst some pathway flexibility has been introduced, it has not been consistently applied. There was also a reported lack of industry awareness of accelerated pathways, and a lack of available information from training providers.

It was felt that a successful program should be well communicated, flexible and accessible, cover industry owners and operators, and be specifically focused on mature age entrants to the industry.

FOCUS AREA 4: FOCUS ON MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS SKILLS

Many Forums felt that there is a degree of apathy and a lack of focus on core management skill within the industry and amongst training providers to the industry. This was identified in some Forums as a key impediment to a more successful industry engagement with and uptake of VET.

Areas for discussion identified in some jurisdictions included the consideration of higher entry barriers to the sector, and the implementation of baseline requirements for taking on apprentices or trainees. These positions did not, however, enjoy majority support across all jurisdictions.

A preferred approach to improved outcomes would incorporate features such as:

- An industry led approach with government support
- Workplace rather than classroom training
- A clear articulation of the business case for involvement
- Less of a focus on formal or high level qualifications, and more on business and management skill sets.

PRIORITY AREA 2: EXPANDING THE TRADITIONAL WORKFORCE

This was an area which elicited discussion in every forum, without identifying many issues consistently across multiple jurisdictions. The concerns that were identified with efforts to expand the sources of labour supply for tourism and hospitality employers included the perceptions that:

- Tourism and hospitality is not the right choice of industry for many long-term unemployed, due to the customer service focus requirements
- Classroom training is often not the best option for indigenous entrants and some others
- Government funding for programs in this area is usually ad-hoc, short term, unreliable for investment decision-making, and not targeted at SMEs.

It was generally agreed that programs in this area need to reflect different processes for different target groups. There was strong and broad agreement that a much greater focus (and funding) is needed on specific, focused and accelerated programs for mature age entrants to the industry. These should include better RPL processes and shorter, sharper training options.

PRIORITY AREA 3: ACCESS TO QUALITY WORKPLACES

At the core of a number of concerns expressed in several Forums is this simple statement made by a Forum attendee:

Tourism is not seen as a real career.

The concerns were simple and stark, and identified consistently by most Forums:

- Tourism and hospitality is seen as a “holiday job”
- Tourism and hospitality employees don’t see the opportunity for career progression
- Tourism and hospitality employees don’t enter into tourism and hospitality with a longer term career pathway.

The suggested solutions are both industry based, and outward facing:

- The development of partnerships between the industry, governments and training providers to build a perception of tourism and hospitality as an industry of choice
- The use of these partnerships to market the values of the industry to potential entrants, existing staff, and “influencers” such as school careers advisors
- Industry networking and use of labour pooling to build greater career pathing options across multiple tourism and hospitality employers.

PRIORITY AREA 4: BETTER WORKFORCE PLANNING

This was not an area of significant discussion in most Forums, apparently falling outside the VET focused discussions. Amongst the few areas of concurrence was the need for a focus on industry leadership and broad stakeholder engagement (including the VET system). It was also stressed in a number of Forums that the industry’s workforce planning processes need to take better account of the need, in many parts of the industry, for seasonal labour and skills supply.

THE “TOP 5” ISSUES

The participants at each Forum were asked, at the end of their session, to consider and nominate what they considered to be the “Top 5” issues of concern, and possible solutions, identified for their jurisdiction. Put simply, these are the “top of mind” issues raised as requiring the most immediate attention, and/or delivering the most potential benefit to the industry and VET users.

The following table combines and rationalises the issues into natural groupings, and shows the location/s and frequency of occurrence for each. The issues are ranked here by frequency of occurrence.

TABLE 2: “TOP 5” ISSUES BY STATE/TERRITORY AND FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE

ISSUE/SOLUTION	STATES/TERRITORIES NOMINATING ISSUE								TOTAL
	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	Tasmania	VIC	WA	
Assessment: the training assessment process (and funding) should be transferred to and owned by the industry	X	X		X	X		X	X	6/8
Funding: the employment contribution of tourism and hospitality industry must be recognised through better funding of training places	X			X	X		X		4/8
Industry role: implement a concerted multi-stakeholder approach to promotion of the tourism and hospitality industry to raise industry profile and desirability as industry of choice (see WA program)	X	X					X	X	4/8
Industry role: improve industry knowledge of the availability and value of training to achieve greater employer “buy in”		X	X					X	3/8
Training: improve training outcomes and relevance through flexible and innovative delivery (including simplified pathways)		X			X			X	3/8

Training: RTOs must be more responsive and accountable to industry and training must reflect workplace realities (including relevant teacher qualifications and experience)	X			X	X				3/8
Funding: better flexibility and balance between existing workers vs. job seekers		X		X					2/8
Industry role: better training and development of managers and owners to improve industry image and career pathways			X			X			2/8

The number one issue raised across all Forums (by some distance – it was identified as a Top 5 issue by six of the eight Forums) is the strongly held belief that the training assessment process (and funding) should be transferred away from training organisations, to the ownership of the industry.

This view was informed by discussion in each Forum around issues of training quality and industry relevance. It was widely felt that the best and most appropriate way to ensure both was to remove control of assessments from those doing the training, and to hand it to those most able to objectively assess the relevance and value of the individual training outcome.

A number of other issues and solutions were raised by three or more jurisdictions:

- **The employment and economic contribution of the tourism and hospitality industry must be recognised through better funding of training places.** It was felt in a number of jurisdictions that tourism and hospitality, along with many other service industries, is undervalued and underfunded by a VET system still skewed towards older trades and manufacturing industries.
- **A concerted multi-stakeholder approach to promotion of the tourism and hospitality industry should be implemented,** in order to raise the industry's profile and desirability as industry of choice for employees and potential employees. The recent WA program was mentioned several times as a positive model, but it was felt that both industry and government programs in this areas were sporadic, underfunded and disconnected.
- **Industry knowledge of the availability and value of training must be improved** to achieve greater employer "buy in". It was felt in a number of jurisdictions that the understanding of the VET system by tourism and hospitality employers is still relatively low, impacting negatively on both engagement with training organisations and take up of available training places and funding.
- **Training outcomes and relevance should be improved through flexible and innovative delivery** (including simplified pathways). These issues were identified by a number of Forums (albeit in slightly differing terms in each). In these jurisdictions, it was felt that the VET system remains too structured, bureaucratic and process focused (rather than outcomes focused).

- **RTOs must be more responsive and accountable to industry, and training must reflect workplace realities** (including relevant teacher qualifications and experience). In those Forums identifying this as a “Top 5” issue for their jurisdiction, and indeed in all jurisdictions, there was an undercurrent of feeling that parts of the VET system exist for their own needs, rather than to meet identified industry or trainee needs. Both this approach, and the suggestion for the transfer of the assessment process to industry, are responses to this identified problem.

SINGLE STATE/TERRITORY ISSUES

Some Forums identified a number of training-related issues of specific concern and relevance in that State or Territory. Whilst these issues may not have the national import of the issues listed above, they can severely impinge on the tourism and hospitality industry's capacity to achieve full value from the VET system, and are therefore worth reporting:

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

- The ACT is a different jurisdiction: unique in how it operates within a federal context. However:
 - Lack of ACT government commitment and understanding: “if you stick your head in the sand those annoying training people will go away” attitude
 - No industry panels/ITABs operate in the ACT (these were wound up in 2005)
 - The ACT government gets expert industry advice for nothing: TICACT provides industry advisory services free of charge (TICACT have a lack of resources to do this role). Government funding should be provided to facilitate this role.
- In the ACT, the public service is a real job in perception: it has better benefits/hours than the tourism and hospitality industry and as such is a strong competitor for jobseekers.
- ACT is a big education town: there is a revolving door at the low skills level (eg: kitchen hands etc) and there are lots of students
- Retaining graduates in the ACT is difficult: there are more employment places than there are graduates to fill them in the ACT
- CIT has a positive image in the ACT: seen as responsive and has good relationships with industry
- There are lots of RTOs and funding available in the ACT

NEW SOUTH WALES

- Training providers in NSW are unaware of changes to Cert III/IV: there has been a breakdown in communication
- VETAB audits are rigorous on paperwork, but not skills focused
- Industry providers are involved in putting cooks through RPL

NORTHERN TERRITORY

- Limited choice of RTOs in the Northern Territory
- Issues with remoteness, and smaller average business size in NT
- Problem in getting NT data on how many education and training places, trainees, graduates
- Employers in NT need to have Indigenous employment strategies (eg: STEP program at SkyCity) and Indigenous training programs
- Indigenous training packages need to offer flexibility and differing learning methods.
- Employers need to have an Indigenous Employee Strategy which needs to understand the culture of an indigenous employee (find the right employer)
- Finding the right project – third party person
- Have a good lead-in program (or pre-employment process) that:
 - gets to know the individual
 - ensures the individual understands the expectations of the workplace
 - involves the family of the individual
 - identifies any barriers the individual may have

QUEENSLAND

- Technical college operational and funding issues: there is a Queensland report regarding this
- Accelerated pathways for those already achieving in industry (RCQ/QTIC program)
- The Queensland Indigenous training process is engaging/calling
- Some PPP funding goes to Cert II
- Qld PPP: the requirement is for a job seekers 100% completion rate to get funding, but there is no employment outcome KPI

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- A South Australian tourism and hospitality career pathway guide is needed
- Loss of Certificate II funding in SA: Certificate II is effectively only via schools
- SA has an industry workforce planning document: available on the ITAB/ skills council website

TASMANIA

- Limited competitive pool for training in Tasmania
- RTO size in Tasmania is small: there is a market disconnection between RTOs and industry
- There is still animosity around building tourist facilities in small towns
- Potential innovation but they are insular closed communities
- Isolated community of Straun took 3-4 yrs to accept “invasion” of outsiders and see the potential long term opportunity for locals to stay and work in these tourism businesses
- Green sensitivity: people want a thriving economy but “not in my backyard” (eco-tourism without the build)
- 457 visa holders make up a small employed number in Tasmania
- Tasmania is a smaller population, with multi generation welfare recipients, therefore no perceived value to training and employment
- A cultural and community mindset: we need to know more about that population

VICTORIA

- The VET system in Victoria is improving but still doesn't appropriately recognise tourism and hospitality
- States don't fund tourism and hospitality pro-rata to size and contribution: the 2006 strategy is not reflected in funding
- The industry is unhappy with the training package outcomes (problems with package holdup): State Training Authorities should have no involvement in training package sign-off

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- Industry engagement is the issue: the WA VET system tries to work with industry but is process not outcome based
- Greater awareness/training is needed amongst employers: the Tourism WA workforce campaign is a positive

RECOMMENDATIONS

This Report is a valuable and important snapshot of the tourism and hospitality industry's views of the Australian VET system, in each state/territory and nationally. This is especially important information in an environment where significant change in the VET sector is likely over the next few years following recommendations from processes including the Bradley Review.

A common theme expressed in many of the Forums was the concern that the report arising from the Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development Forum process – [this Report](#) – will become “another filing cabinet filler”. It is vital that this not occur; that the contents of this Report be fully leveraged to the industry's greatest good.

The following recommendations are made with this in mind. It is recommended that:

1. This Report be considered by Service Skills Australia, its Board, and the Tourism and Hospitality IAC, for adoption as representing the tourism and hospitality industry's national view of the VET system as it currently stands
2. This Report be widely disseminated across the tourism and hospitality industry and training providers, including all stakeholder organisations invited to the Forum series
3. This Report also be disseminated to key Government stakeholders including Ministers, Ministerial staff, and public servants with relevance to the issues discussed herein, at both Federal and State/Territory level
4. That Service Skills Australia conduct a focused and concerted advocacy program with Ministerial staff and state training authorities and regulators, to ensure that the contents of this Report (and the views of the industry) are widely understood and consequently supported through public policy
5. That Service Skills Australia co-ordinate with the key industry organisations to involve them directly in this advocacy program, so as to ensure a seamless and coordinated industry voice
6. That where appropriate, State/Territory specific issues also be brought to the attention of decision makers in those jurisdictions through the course of this advocacy program
7. That Service Skills Australia consider the creation of mirror Workforce Development Strategies, and follow up Forum programs, in each of the key industry sectors within its coverage.

ATTACHMENT 1: NORTHERN TERRITORY FORUM SUMMARY

- Date:** Friday, 27 March 2009
- Location:** Holiday Inn, The Esplanade, Darwin
- Attendees:** Wendy Moulds, Executive Officer, CHARTTES Training Advisory Council
Stevie Wie, Trainer, Karen Sheldon Catering (also an RTO)
Sandra Black, HR Manager, SkyCity Darwin
Lisa Clarke, HR Manager, Travelodge Mirambeena Resort
Peter Langford, HR Manager, Darwin Turf Club
Phil Elsegood, Cross Cultural Consultants
Lisa Gilbert, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 5

1. Employees should have access to funding for in-house training
2. Improved industry knowledge of what's available and the value of training
3. More industry based funding for training places
4. More and better training and development of small business managers and owners
5. The creation of a skilled staff labour pool to deal with NT's seasonality and lack of supply

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - Ensure that training providers are of highest quality
 - Limited choice of RTO's in NT
 - Competency based courses don't have enough workplace based experience: range of scenarios aren't addressed in these types of courses
 - Classroom based VET is not working: should not be able to do training in blocks, should be a one day a week type situation, that way on the job training is the focus
 - Too much info in too tight a time frame: they are being rushed through
 - Non-completion rates are very high
 - Gap in National Training Packages in the basics: front of house, front office systems
 - The basic technical skills training is right
 - Third party field officers are making a difference (working well)

- Too easy for apprentices/trainees to pick and choose the easy path (via transfer) to complete their training
- Cherry picking by students
- No loyalty: too easy to run
- 2nd/3rd year apprentices should be accountable for training 1st year apprentices
- Training packages should have a “train the trainer” component
- VET School based courses are working very well in NT
- School based apprenticeships are very good as well
- Can do first year apprenticeship plus finish school at the same time
- The RTO audit process should be refined so that it doesn't take away from the training

- Industry Role:
 - Issues regarding capacity of employers and managers to mentor and train
 - Competency based v job experience: not cheap for industries to have apprenticeships when they can go out and get a cook (who has done a competency based course) and train them themselves
 - Industry don't look for qualifications, they look for experience, then train in-house
 - Employer relationships with RTO's and Training Providers need to be strong
 - Easier for big businesses: very difficult for small business
 - Group Training schemes could help this: works well but very expensive
 - Need to get RTO's and industry together and communicate funding availability/opportunities
 - Building capacity: developing people in all their capabilities
 - Need to educate employers about training packages
 - If a fully national structure is to be introduced, then a presence in each state and territory is required

- Assessment:
 - A rigorous and thorough assessment program
 - A neutral assessor (independent of training provider)
 - More industry focused audits – get feedback from industry on quality of trained
 - More publicised complaints system/process
 - A feedback system

- Funding:
 - Range of training providers get paid based on student hours so there is a tendency to give students competency for courses they may not be attending: if group of 10 only 3 turn up, they still tick 10
 - Therefore people get competency without turning up for courses
 - Need more program consistency, delivery and funding (not just short term trials)
 - More access for state association to get funding to meet industry needs
 - Need less time and money spent on the process, but more on the training
 - PPP – only two pilot programs running in the NT
 - Too much rigmarole
 - DEEWR funding: short term mini outcomes, not planning for long term

- State Agencies:
 - CHARTTES feel that they are very supportive of National Standard
 - Industry have a close and positive relationship with State Association
 - Public policy tends to focus on training for training sake

- Data:
 - Comparative report of training and programs needed
 - Need consolidated labour force data including turnover rate, time to recruit, retention periods, for whole of industry at territory/regional level
 - Problem in getting NT data on how many education and training places, trainees, graduates

- Territory-Specific Issues:
 - Employers in NT need to have Indigenous employment strategies (eg: STEP program at SkyCity) and Indigenous training programs
 - Indigenous training packages need to offer flexibility and differing learning methods.
 - Employers need to have an Indigenous Employee Strategy which needs to understand the culture of an indigenous employee (find the right employer)
 - Finding the right project – third party person
 - Have a good lead-in program (or pre-employment process) that:
 - gets to know the individual
 - ensures the individual understands the expectations of the workplace
 - involves the family of the individual
 - identifies any barriers the individual may have

- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - Industry doesn't recognise most qualifications
 - Employers are looking to non-accredited courses
 - RPL would be better if industry valued qualifications more highly
 - RPL could and certainly should work better

- **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**
 - Should be flexible and based on experience
 - How specific should previous experience be?
 - Do we recognise core skills from other industries?

- **Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills**
 - Same in all areas
 - Lack of soft skills training and mentoring
 - Issue because of the smaller businesses in NT

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- General feeling is that industry is up-skilling employees after they hire them, they don't have the skills required when they first hire them: employers have to train them
- Majority of candidates are unskilled: therefore too much by employers on unaccredited in-house training (VET is not helping)
- More funding needs to be available to big businesses to provide/deliver accredited training
- Costs of compliance training are a bar to "business training": employers tend to focus on the training they must deliver ie OH&S compliance training, rather than career development training for employees
- How will industry respond to the short term labour glut?

ATTACHMENT 2: Tasmania FORUM SUMMARY

- Date:** Monday, 30 March 2009
- Location:** Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart
- Attendees:** Toni Brown, Group Manager Recruitment and Training, The Federal Group
Geoff Logan, Senior Project Officer Workforce Development, Skills Tasmania
My-Le Kha, Service Skills Australia
Rainer Wilton, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 4

1. A focus on management and business skills to improve industry image and career pathways
2. A need for better data about the current and potential workforce in Tasmania
3. A focus on retention for funded training to justify an increase in funding
4. Greater access to skill set funding: increase skill set rather than traditional functional funding

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - Skills sets training is a positive from a ROI perspective
 - Opportunity for a “Skills Passport” implemented through industry
 - People with qualifications are put on the job and not competent in the job
 - Generally not confident in the training system
 - Delivery? People in TAFE system largely out of touch with industry (old style delivery)
 - Commercial kitchen vs. training kitchen: trainers themselves need to have current and relevant experience in the industry
 - There is a limited competitive pool in Tasmania
 - RTO size in Tasmania is small: there is a market disconnection between RTOs and industry
 - How do small employers know what they’re buying in terms of training?
 - Removing quarantines: they need to be better in what they do
 - Currently there is no choice: group training may help
 - Guiding is a big key growth area: Skills Tasmania and TAFE ran this in the past
 - Opportunity for large employers to become an RTO: more attractive as they keep waiting but it is not part of their core business
 - Would like to see TAFE get rid of deadwood
 - Trainers need business acumen to identify commercial interest of employer: true commercial partner
 - Maintain ongoing relationship from their end

- Would like to see a realistic understanding of the industry (people who open up cafes etc) through a closer relationship with staff on the ground to advise RTOs
 - Concerns regarding capacity of RTOs to deliver training: quality of RTO and expertise
 - Food and beverage training is largest turnover area: people don't want to stay in it long enough to obtain a full qualification (churn out is quite quick)
 - There is disconnect between school and workplace
 - Have to retrain people once they have come from study especially in food and beverage
 - Training is too much wedded to the nominal hours of training and experience

- Industry Role:
 - There is a growth in the tourism industry in Tasmania: tourism and hospitality a key employer of young people
 - People don't see the opportunity for career progression: they don't enter into tourism and hospitality with a long term career pathway
 - Industry leadership is an issue in Tasmania
 - Should SSA be on the ground in Tasmania to ensure they have an industry presence?
 - Presence in Tasmania may be quite significant opportunity
 - Key issues: lack of industry participation, tourism and hospitality not an attractive industry and the management of the industry
 - Primary industry is still very predominant in Tasmania, despite tourism and hospitality being a big and growing sector
 - Need to focus on making industry attractive for people and the retention of people
 - Major employers looking to work with other industries such as Economic Council in Tasmania
 - Don't think that you can offer external incentives to employers that might not meet the need
 - F2F facilitation is required in Tasmania regarding workforce development
 - There are Enterprise Centres that work with SMEs in Tasmania
 - There is a need for the career management of staff in Tasmania as there is no real tourism and hospitality pathway that has been promoted
 - Currently no visible opportunity to move to a tertiary qualification: perceived career value of tourism and hospitality?
 - TIC Tasmania need to take ownership of these issues?
 - And accept the issue of capacity of managers
 - Question: who takes the lead to drive this in Tasmania?
 - Need to iron out the seasonality of the industry: attempts to contact employers in other parts of Australia to develop an agreement to counter the seasonal nature of the industry and seasonal demand and the development of skills along the way for individuals
 - In Europe, waiting is highly regarded compared to Australia

- Assessment:
 - Needs to be quality, demand driven system
 - Employer of choice system: looking at a RTO of choice

- League table of RTOs would not work in Tasmania: small enough community to know who does well and who doesn't
 - How do we increase the capacity of RTOs?
 - Assessment criteria to implement?
 - Best practice delivery: real disconnect there, have assessment criteria
 - Gives assurance of a level playing field: small employers may not know any better
 - Funding:
 - Quality outcome is more important than how long it takes
 - But there is no measure of this at the moment
 - Funding is residing with the RTO, which effects the employer or employee having a say
 - Would like to see training as mobile as possible
 - State Agencies:
 - ST reports it is a long consultation process, but definitely having a go
 - Data:
 - Data is hard to get and of questionable reliability in Tasmania
 - Input and output data is an issue
 - Need to know more about the population
 - More data on geographic regions
 - State-Specific Issues:
 - There is still animosity around building tourist facilities in small towns
 - Potential innovation but they are insular closed communities
 - Isolated community of Straun took 3-4 yrs to accept "invasion" of outsiders and see the potential long term opportunity for locals to stay and work in these tourism businesses
 - Green sensitivity: want a thriving economy but not in my backyard (eco-tourism without the build)
 - 457 visa holders make up a small employed number in Tasmania
 - Tasmania is a smaller population, with multi generation welfare recipients, therefore no perceived value to training and employment
 - A cultural and community mindset: we need to know more about that population
- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - Better recognition of learning skills: RPL those in leadership positions who have progressed due to their technical skills
 - Will benefit in going through a RPL to gain a qualification
 - Pre-assessment of RPL to assist people to obtain full qualifications: less onerous and daunting for employers
 - RPL doesn't have the recognition it deserves
 - Need for a self assessment tool employees could work through themselves
 - Driver should be tourism Tasmania or the Tourism Council to promote the value of upskilling, attracting people to consider career paths in the industry and to look at tourism as a profession: SMEs do not have that perspective

- **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**

- Move away from traditional apprenticeships is part of the solution
- One large employer runs their trainees through a 6 week skills development course upfront (self selection upfront) then when they run their 12 week program.
- Little drop out from that pool
- High retention rate but it is hard to win over the Chefs
- There is no knowledge under the accelerated pathway that the work component is removed and training just undertaken
- With mature age workers, income is a big issue, especially when they would have to drop to a lower apprentice wage
- Industry has to value the life experiences of mature age workers, and there is the need from them to keep up with financial commitments they already may have
- Possible mentor opportunity for mature aged workers
- Cultural issue around “this is how it was done in my day” with mature aged apprentices
- Move towards an organisational trainee where the apprentice is able to see different facets of the business

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

- Large employers become disconnected from those who have gone through the VET system largely because they have engineered their own
- There needs to be a better link between training and employment outcomes
- No real demand for qualifications in Tasmanian tourism and hospitality:
 - Kitchen is well regulated
 - Customer service is a real issue
 - Industry doesn't ask for qualifications for customer service
 - The qualifications do not stack up to their demands and needs
 - More and more people come without a qualification anyway
 - Tend to look at the attitudes of the jobseeker: once they identify the right person with the right mindset, they teach them the skills they need

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

- There is a lack of recognition moving from a VET qualification to a tertiary qualification
- Needs to be a link between the two for career advancement and portability of skills and qualifications
- Placement of short courses and skills into a wider context so that there is a transportability of skills to the next role

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- Time, where to go and what to do are key concerns
- Workforce planning is a big thing to grapple, and for SMEs it would be harder
- There needs to be a definition within industry regarding leadership: no on the ground leadership and engagement of industry

ATTACHMENT 3: SOUTH AUSTRALIA FORUM SUMMARY

Date: Tuesday, 31 March 2009

Location: Holiday Inn, Adelaide

Attendees: John Hart, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Sally Neville, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Australia (SA)
Terry Soukoulis, Vice President, Restaurant & Catering Australia (SA)
Trevor Evans, HR/IR Manager, Australian Hotels Association (SA)
Tina Fahy, HR/IR Adviser, Australian Hotels Association (SA)
John Cassebohm, Executive Officer, FTH Skills Council
Carol Graham, Office Manager/Trade Rec, FTH Skills Council
Mark Varricchio, HR Advisor, SkyCity Adelaide Casino
Katrina O’Hare, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 5

1. Flexibility
2. Ensure quality of training and assessment by transferring assessment to the industry
3. Training must be portable for the full range of business types and sizes
4. Training must reflect workplace realities
5. The funding regime and structure must promote goals 1-4

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - “Antiquated skills” of graduates
 - Practical business skills are a gap
 - Chefs cannot manage
 - Sales/P&L skills are lacking
 - Higher level graduates don’t go to SMEs
 - Training structures: fitted to big business
 - Qualifications must reflect the needs of the industry
 - Concern about “move to highest possible qualification” and away from skill sets
 - SMEs not asked what they need
 - Focus on “big hotel” skills
 - No vision of SMEs as entry point (and end point)
 - Soft skills are lacking

- Should management students be getting “real workplace” experience whilst studying?
 - Consistency: what constitutes “employability skills”?
 - School - work articulation is “stuffed”
 - There are many issues regarding the auditing and accountability of RTOs
 - International students cannot be placed for practical due to language/ cultural issues
 - Online trade qualifications are a problem
- Industry Role:
 - SA tourism and hospitality career pathway guide is needed
 - Linkages/employer inputs to actual training needed
 - Time mentoring to business cycles
 - Use recent retirees from the industry as trainers
 - People seeking work/life balance
 - Who advises on career paths? (including training)
- Assessment:
 - The assessment stage must measure real-world conditions
 - Some move towards industry linkages needed: how will this be funded?
 - Workplace based assessment?
 - Transferring resources to industry from state for assessments removes politics
 - Should QA be moved from RTO to each individual trainee/student?
 - Should be one body that approves the assessment as opposed to each individual RTO
 - This would ensure standards across the board
- Funding:
 - Loss of Certificate II funding in SA
 - Therefore Certificate II effectively only via schools
 - Concerns that a “voucher” system would distract training focus away from industry needs
 - Vouchers would also increase risk of marketing based training system with ill-informed decision making by students
- State Agencies:
 - State governments should not be afraid to shut down non-compliant trainers
 - Not about regulating quality of delivery, but quality of outcome
- Data:
 - Inadequate state-level workforce data
 - Need data on which to hang demands to government
 - Stronger and more accurate VET data needed by sector
- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - Perception of “short circuit” proper training and get funding
 - Should there be a separation of recognition of experience and learning qualifications
 - Should be extended to Certificate level qualifications

- Qualifications equal higher pay, but do not always equal higher output
- Need for an industry qualifications authority?
- Link back to QA at individual not RTO level

- **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**
 - Who judges where they are on the pathway and how?

- **Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills**
 - Employers need skills not qualifications

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

- Tourism and hospitality is still “ageist” and biased on physical capacity
- Lack of continuity between workforce trial programs (eg: return to work)

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- About employer skills gap training: HR
- PPP is seeing good RTOs moving into workplaces
- Need to move to units of competence, not aggregated qualifications
- SA has an industry workforce planning document: available on the ITAB/ skills council website

ATTACHMENT 4: QUEENSLAND FORUM SUMMARY

- Date:** Thursday, 2 April 2009
- Location:** Holiday Inn, Brisbane
- Attendees:** Lily Reid, Training Manager, Restaurant & Catering Queensland
Chris Bessell-Browne, National Learning & Development Manager, Qantas Catering
Sharon Galloway, Skills Link Officer, Queensland Tourism Industry Council
Garry Bushell, Manager, Caravanning Queensland
John Hart, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Alastair Wilson, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 5

1. Effect a better balance for funding between existing workers and job seekers
2. The assessment process should be transferred to industry
3. Recognise the importance of the industry through funding
4. RTOs must be more responsive and accountable to industry
5. Better information to inform purchasing decisions regarding RTOs

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - Trainers need to be business-savvy and consistent
 - Lack of contextual business experience
 - Too much emphasis on classroom learning during “education hours” 9-5, not business hours
 - Small businesses find TAFE graduates self-important but not skilled: “overinflated and underskilled”
 - Need flexible and competent people to work in kitchens
 - What skills do they need? Must have immediate industry relevance
 - Not wanting to do things they can’t do or aren’t relevant
 - Concerns about currency of graduate skills and speed of work
 - Little understanding of industry priorities
 - Many students have a romantic idea of cheffing as a job
 - Inconsistency of practical work
 - Is there a process for vetting workplaces for apprentices?
 - Yes, but often a gap between what apprentice needs to do and what the workplace can offer
 - Setting students up for failure (eg: focus on event management)
 - Graduate expectations too high for entry-level tasks

- Group training costs are beyond many small businesses
 - They keep away as small businesses often default on payment
 - If group training were well-funded by government (dollar gap met) it could work for small businesses
 - QA of trainers is an audit process/paper trail, not linked to quality of training
 - Quality of cohort undertaking training: how does this affect the outcome?
 - Lots of irrelevant programs, and difficult/slow to change them
 - Very slow TAFE response to changes in industry needs
 - VET in schools: expectation gap big between hopes and the reality
 - Qualification of teachers? Tourism and hospitality teachers in schools must have relevant skills
 - Tech college issues and funding: Qld report regarding this?
 - Too large? Too bureaucratic? Access issues?
 - Industry wants:
 - Track record in similar environment: very relevant experience
 - Offer that's "speaking my language"
 - Tailored, not off the shelf
 - Costed offer
 - How long to deliver (and where) and results
 - Accelerated pathway options
 - Need proactive business approach
 - Training organisations should win business like any other supplier
 - The focus is on auditing process and trivia, not outcomes
 - Buyer wants to see how the trainer delivers in the classroom
 - Clarity/accessibility of process
 - TAA too easy and not specific
 - Training quality lags
 - Mentoring needed
 - Administration of training needs is a "ticking" process: not intuitive
 - RTOs more focused on how much money they're getting rather than outcome quality
 - Eligibility should be freed up (rather than locking out industry entry)
- Industry Role:
- Industry does not understand training package
 - Identifying right people for the jobs: not a glamour industry
 - At the entry point, career advisors don't have links to industry, industry knowledge or understanding, yet they are pushing/enrolling students
 - Career advisors in schools not industry-aware: how do we educate them?
 - CPE for them?
 - Completion rates (money to construction industry, etc)
 - Why no tourism and hospitality follow up?
 - Industry own training outcome
- Assessment:
- Assessment is a paper system
 - Trainers/assessors don't understand industry needs
 - Need greater industry validation
 - Assessors not always talking to industry or trainers but should
 - Assessors and trainers should be separate

- Quality assessment should be made by the user: the employer
 - CPD for trainers and assessors: a points system via industry?
 - Industry can't control quality of training but can do something about quality of assessment
 - The system is about industry qualifications: should assessment be by industry?
 - Could the industry handle it? Yes, with funding
 - Would it be better? Yes
 - Who will pay for industry involvement?
 - Funding:
 - RTO investment is big and they need to get the return (including people completing) so they do what they need in order to get that
 - Funding of TAFEs should be delinked from nominal hours and linked to success (industry assessment process)
 - Under a voucher system, students would not be able to make an informed choice
 - Existing workers wouldn't bother
 - The system would be driven by marketing
 - Some PPP funding goes to Cert II
 - Funding does not reflect higher costs in some courses for equipment etc
 - Data:
 - Buying issues: how to make an informed decision on choosing an RTO?
 - What does a business need to do this: knowledge of training packages/VET system
 - Industry associations make decision
 - Lack of clarity of information, so hire untrained staff instead and word-of-mouth recommendations
 - Ranking/rating system is not the way to go
- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - Lack of appreciation of prior learning (20-30 years of experience in the training room isn't acknowledged)
 - RPL (WA model - caravan/parks)
 - Trainers don't understand RPL
- **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**
 - Accelerated pathways for those already achieving in industry (RCQ/QTIC program)?
- **Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills**
 - How do we educate industry: inappropriate staff allocation of tasks
 - Management training and advisory: visit them, they won't come to you
 - Articulate the business case to become involved
 - Focus less on high level qualifications, more on actual business skills

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

- Hospitality not the right business for long-term unemployed due to cultural issues
- Indigenous training community as a business entry/set-up
- Qld process is engaging/calling

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

- Need business flexibility funding for training purposes

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- Stronger industry/RTO links on workforce planning
- Better reflection of seasonal skills/labour needs
- Qld PPP: job seekers 100% completion rate to get funding, but no employment outcome KPI

ATTACHMENT 5: VICTORIA FORUM SUMMARY

Date: Monday, 6 April 2009

Location: Holiday Inn, Flinders Melbourne

Attendees: John Sweetman, Workplace Relations Advisor, Australian Hotels Association
John Hart, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Anthony McIntosh, CEO, Victorian Tourism Industry Council/Tourism Alliance Vic
Ros Harvey, Past President and Business Owner, Restaurant & Catering Australia (Vic)
Robyn Keenan, Skills Link Manager, Queensland Tourism Industry Council
Alastair Wilson, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 5

1. Greater recognition of the size and nature of the industry and career pathways by government
2. Transfer of assessment process (and cash to run it) to industry
3. Funding of training places based on employment contribution of tourism and hospitality
4. State to keep out of industry-based standards for training
5. Promotion/inspiration of industry and its “sexiness”.

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - VET system in Victoria is improving but still doesn't appropriately recognise tourism and hospitality
 - Connections between industry and VET not great:
 - Lack of input into curriculum
 - Lack of respect for the delivery of the qualifications
 - Lack of “real life” training
 - Too many trainers just in it for the money
 - “Everyone who turns up passes”
 - Group training is just about money
 - Group training companies are reactive, not proactive
 - Have moved to supporting big business (following the money) not small businesses
 - Money-driven tendering for GTOs pushes providers upmarket
 - Lack of “real world” experience of graduate trainees
 - More industry linkage/placement needed through training
 - Therefore more linkages built on in-business training
 - VET in schools: some have better facilities than RTOs, others a dismal failure

- No real transition from schools to TAFE
 - Kids with a certificate go up a payrate without experience
 - Better training/industry linkage (including better employment options) will be a desirable product
 - Incorporate employment service with training providers?
 - Need for greater cohesion between different schools/universities with tourism and hospitality offerings
 - Universities and TAFEs not about industry workforce development: about “bums on seats”
 - Concerns that the Bradley Review de-emphasises the industry base of VET
 - What outcomes are reported to “consumers”?
 - Concern about lack of student commitment in a voucher system
 - Training packages not about delivery, about outcomes
 - Need to preserve the value of the qualification: skills, knowledge attitude required to do a job
 - RTOs/schools can train what they like, but call it what it is
 - NZ split between institutional and industry-based qualifications
 - It’s about what you can do, not academic rigour
 - Assessment is the key
 - Problems of qualification devaluation by overseas students “training for the points”
- Industry Role:
 - Business doesn’t bother with TAFEs
 - Prefer to recruit people with right attitude and train them up themselves
 - If industry doesn’t use trained people they won’t be there
 - Pre-qualification for business owners in how to train your apprentice
 - 3 hour seminar on what the responsibilities are
 - Industry sees trainees as cheap labour rather than valuable
 - Payments to employers in some cases: not linked to training outcomes
 - “Scare” industry into taking responsibility
 - Student placement could turn around business operators’ opinions
- Assessment:
 - Assessment not sufficiently industry-driven
 - Transfer of assessment process to industry: funding included
 - Many assessors in TAFE not in touch with current industry situation
 - RTO payment should be based on independent assessment
 - Assessment-only RTOs should not exist
 - ITSE-style outcomes assessment of training providers
 - Focus down to school level (not just whole-of-institution)
- Funding:
 - Tourism and hospitality “not a growth industry”: \$ cuts for 2-3 years
 - States don’t fund tourism and hospitality pro-rata to size and contribution
 - 2006 strategy not reflected in funding
 - Transfer of funding to students (as recommended by the Bradley Review) could be a disaster for the industry
 - Students will all choose “sexy” courses such as events management
 - How will they pick their trainer?
 - Systems of specification/regulation must be nationally consistent
 - National regulator needs national funding to make it work

- Diversion away from less profitable tourism and hospitality places by RTOs
 - Skills councils should take the lead for the industry and get the money to do so
 - Ongoing forward funding commitments needed
 - State Agencies:
 - Industry unhappy with training package outcomes (problems with package holdup)
 - State Training Authorities should have no involvement in training package sign-off
 - Data:
 - Data is insufficient: job coding has no value for tourism and hospitality
 - Data doesn't cover seasonality, casualisation, mixed skill sets
 - Data is flawed and states don't use it to make informed decisions
- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - A "Skills Recognition Program" needed (not RPL, as this is devalued), with assessment in the workplace
 - RPL is too complex and costly: an independent assessment of skills preferable
 - What's the value in seeking RPL?
 - Transfer of units from weak RTOs to a good one devalues system
 - Industry doesn't respect current RPL process and outcomes
 - Not recognising learning: recognising skills
- **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**
 - Problem not in assessing skills but in designing training to fill gaps
- **Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills**
 - No pre-requisite for employers taking on an apprentice
 - Need to know that the apprentice is here to learn, therefore a qualification should be mandatory
 - SMEs don't like apprentices moving on under group training
 - Lack of funds for upskilling once completed qualifications
 - Structure biased against just-in-time upskilling

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

- Long term unemployed very difficult to use
- TAFEs not flexible for trainees "outside the box"
- Formal qualifications a barrier due to high cost
- Employability skills a barrier
- Obligation to "welfare" categories but tourism and hospitality needs to attract winners and leaders
- Government hypothecation of funds required

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- Lack of community/collaboration between trainers: therefore no promotion of tourism and hospitality careers
- Industry needs to promote its attractiveness and attract people from other sectors
- Promotion of industry: no industry development levies directed to development and promotion

ATTACHMENT 6: AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY FORUM SUMMARY

- Date:** Wednesday, 8 April 2009
- Location:** Crowne Plaza, Canberra
- Attendees:** Jasmina Troni, HR Manager, Casino Canberra
Dian Jones, Industry Liaison Team, Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism
Peter Hancock, Industry Liaison Team, Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism
Joseph Griffith, Tourism Industry Council ACT
Rainer Wilton, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 5

1. Industry/Government engagement model to promote the Tourism and Hospitality Industry as an industry of choice to work in (similar to what has happened in WA)
2. Address concerns regarding the relevance of VET teachers' qualifications and experience
3. Development of an industry panel for assessment of training outcomes
4. Establishing a linking role between government and industry through the engagement or establishment of advisory bodies (for example using TIC ACT as the link and providing funding for this role)
5. Obtaining real government support for the industry as a major private sector employer

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - VET in schools is being delivered by trainers who aren't qualified: the trainers are not trained
 - There is a lack of industry experience of trainers
 - More industry engagement by providers is required: industry and providers need to be brought together
 - Trainers must have qualifications in the skills being delivered
 - Is there a skill shortage in teaching?
 - Issues around the quality of training delivery: addressed by new Training Package, however implementation and regulation of providers needs to be reviewed
 - Teachers must also understand the theory and also case studies
 - There are insufficient "bodies" to fill the training places
 - CIT has a positive image in the ACT: seen as responsive and has good relationships with industry
 - There are lots of RTOs and funding available in the ACT

- The quality of training and assessment is variable: some strong teams with industry experience, some “cowboys”
 - CIT is the benchmark in the ACT
 - No horror stories with RTOs, just a general “lack of passion”
 - How does an employer know a good trainer? Canberra is a small town and references can be checked
 - Reporting/ranking RTOs: need to know industry relationship and sponsors
 - Who are the trainers: what is their background and attitude?
- Industry Role:
 - Big employers are engaging a range of training providers to develop chef/cook skills
 - Some use CIT & others private providers to develop these skills
 - Industry is happy to engage with providers by going into classrooms or taking them onto site to give industry exposure for trainees, trainers and assessors
 - Retaining graduates in the ACT is difficult: there are more employment places than there are graduates to fill them in the ACT
 - Most employers don’t look for graduates
- Assessment:
 - Assessment should be conducted by a relevant industry panel
- Funding:
 - There is a lack of government funding/understanding of the tourism and hospitality industry in the ACT by government
 - No industry panels/ITABs operate in the ACT (were wound up in 2005)
 - The ACT government gets expert industry advice for nothing: TICACT provides industry advisory services free of charge
 - Tourism is an easy target
 - A “voucher” system for existing employees would give employers power
 - Funding is available for training: lots of red tape at the operational level impedes it being accessed
 - Lack of resources within TICACT to do these industry advisory roles
 - Government funding should be provided to facilitate this linking role (industry to TICACT and TICACT to government)
 - Similar structures exist elsewhere (eg: grower levies)
- State Agencies:
 - High levels of bureaucracy can be a barrier to accessing the system
- Data:
 - Some gaps exist in public workforce data for tourism and hospitality industry
 - Is the problem one of the composite nature of the tourism and hospitality industry?
 - Data issue is also one for industry associations: what do peak bodies provide in other industries?
- Territory-Specific Issues:
 - The ACT is a different jurisdiction: unique in how it operates within a federal context

- Tourism and hospitality industry contributes \$1.75B into ACT economy
 - ACT is a big education town: there is a revolving door at the low skills level (eg: kitchen hands etc) and there are lots of students
 - In the ACT, public service is a real job in perception: has better benefits/hours than the tourism and hospitality industry
 - Both the ACT and federal government's public service are strong competitors for jobseekers with the tourism industry
 - Lack of ACT government commitment and understanding: "if you stick your head in the sand those annoying training people will go away" attitude
- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - No negative experiences in RPL were reported
 - **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**
 - **Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills**
 - TICACT develop an accelerated pathway program that has now been implemented in SA
 - There was some resistance in industry to the implementation of this accelerated pathways program
 - The program had a high drop out rate which was due to the high pressure of the program
 - Graduates of the program are of a high quality and do work in industry
 - There were more jobs than people available for this program

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- Remuneration within the industry is an issue when compared with the public service
- Some positives of the tourism and hospitality industry:
 - diversified working opportunities
 - global opportunities
 - varied hours are a positive for some
 - it is an industry for people who are creative and it is a creative industry
 - selling these positives is a national issue

ATTACHMENT 7: NEW SOUTH WALES FORUM SUMMARY

Date: Thursday, 9 April 2009

Location: Regus, Alfred Street Sydney

Attendees: Shayne Leslie, Member Services Manager, Clubs Australia
Craig Buller, Organisational Development Manager, Qantas
David Gigg, Learning and Development Manager, Compass Group
Robert Goldman, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Australia (NSW)
Gary O’Riordan, Deputy Managing Director, Australian Tourism Export Council
Euan Robertson, National Research Manager, Tourism and Transport Forum
Robyn McDonald, Training Manager, Restaurant & Catering Australia (NSW)
Mark Scanlan, Owner/Operator, Garfish Restaurants
John Hart, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Australia
Bill Galvin, CEO, Tourism Training Australia
Rick Myatt, Director Education and Training, Australian Federation of Travel Agents
Helen Fraser, Director, Ultimately Sydney
Michael Bennett, COO, HTN
Jerry Bour, Board Member, Hotel Motel & Accommodation Association, and TIC NSW
Kit McMahon, General Manager, Service Skills Australia
Daniela Jaron, Research Leader, Service Skills Australia
Lisa Gilbert, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 5

1. A concerted approach and synchronised messages between industry, trainer, students and governments
2. Move to an industry/owned assessment process, including the transfer of funding.
3. Increased industry awareness and understanding of VET, leading to greater employer buy-in
4. Increase tax deductibility and funding options for training (remove the barrier between new and existing workers)
5. Simplify the pathways and sell them

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - Lack of training portability:
 - Process is difficult
 - Lack of centralised management of training
 - Greater flexibility needed across all training
 - Trainee misconceptions about what commercial cooking is
 - High drop out rate (non completion)
 - Gaps in core technical skills in training graduates: shift to in-house training due to this gap
 - Outsourced in-house (using a single provider) works okay
 - There are good providers in travel training
 - TAFE's market-driven structure is not working for tourism and hospitality
 - Focus of private RTOs on foreign students
 - Travel training package not aligned to industry needs
 - Lack of applicants for travel training places
 - Workplace hours a problem for NESB students
 - TAFEs are keen to work with industry but lacking some flexibility
 - Increasing TAFE focus on tailoring programs
 - Issues with correlating industry expectations regarding different certificate levels and actual work skills
 - Problem with students perception of qualification value and their expected work level
 - Employer/RTO relationships: need to invite industry practitioners into classrooms
 - Monitoring system to require 3rd and 4th year apprentices to mentor 1st and 2nd year apprentices: build this into training package
 - Marriage of VET and tertiary education (as proposed by the Bradley Review) carries risk: graduates with lower technical skills and an ever-increasing classroom focus
 - Industry response could include career pathways (including linking positions positively to certificate level qualifications)
 - Industry Role:
 - Are employers committed to providing in-workplace training?
 - Train employers on the value of training
 - Cost of training to small and large employers
 - Leadership needed: communication needed
 - "Train them and they'll leave" mentality: "what if you don't train them and they stay?"
 - Perception of training is poor in small family run businesses
 - In travel, internal training is sales oriented
 - Industry "branding" to attract entrants: lack of funding for highest profile ads
 - Can businesses deliver a "sexy" job?
 - Lack of employer awareness re flexible delivery and workplace pathways
 - Lack of career pathways across employers
 - Move towards a European model of valuing service careers needed
 - Need stronger RTO relationships and industry preferred suppliers

- Assessment:
 - RTO trainers who are also assessors is a problem
 - Industry ownership of assessment (fully funded) would improve the trust of industry with the system
 - AFTA has a trainer accreditation and rating system: “star system”
 - Need a whole-of-industry star rating system of training providers owned by the industry
 - Should cover universities in star rating system
 - The test would be: “can people do the job?”
- Funding:
 - TAFE under pressure to reduce/close programs: tourism and hospitality must fight for its share
 - A voucher system would see dropouts go up: “holiday job” syndrome, and a move to “sexy” courses
 - It may assist mature age entry
 - Vouchers would lead to a lack of industry control, a focus on marketing to students, and on the most profitable programs
 - Need to consider variable funding based on resource intensiveness of courses
- State Agencies:
 - VETAB audits are rigorous on paperwork, but not skills focused
- Data:
 - Industry overview data, pressure points, training data: where is it?
 - How many workers are available in my market?
 - Question is how to use this and make it employer accessible
 - Projections based on historical data
 - Need to share operational data within industry
- State-Specific Issues:
 - Providers in NSW are unaware of changes to Cert III/IV: breakdown in communication
- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - Need for more RPL for “old hard heads”
 - New process for electronic RPL in commercial cookery developed
 - Lack of industry awareness
 - R & C NSW heavily involved in putting cooks through RPL
 - Cultural change needed without disadvantaging mature age workers
 - Concerns regarding semantics of RPL: should be recognitions of skills not learning
 - Evidence gathering requirements from VETAB are by nature onerous (due to the “learning” focus)
 - Problem of RPL trust with bad RPLs
- **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**
 - Owners and operators
 - Accelerated pathways needed for mature age entrants

- **Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills**
 - Apathy/lack of focus on core management skills
 - Build higher training/qualification barriers to entry to the sector?
 - Baseline requirements for taking on apprentices, food safety and other requirements
 - Industry led approach with government support

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- Special need for different groups
- Classroom training not the best for indigenous groups and some others
- Funding is short term and not targeted at SMEs
- Much greater focus needed on mature age: better RPL, short/sharp training
- Mature = flexible
- Funding needed for specific, focused and accelerated mature age programs

ATTACHMENT 8: WESTERN AUSTRALIA FORUM SUMMARY

- Date:** Wednesday, 22 April 2008
- Location:** Holiday Inn, Perth City Centre
- Attendees:** Mal Gammon, Future Now
Michelle Sidebottom, Future Now
Anne McLean, Hilton Hotels
Barry Felstead, Burswood
Angela Lynch, Australian Hotels Association (WA)
Michael Scott, Mustard Catering/Spotless Services
Christine Cole, Tourism WA
Umberto Giancristoforo, Compass Group
Graham Moss, CEO, Tourism Council WA
Sue Knowles, Board Member, Tourism Council WA
Rainer Wilton, Service Skills Australia
Peter Olah, Facilitator

Summary of proceedings:

Top 5

1. Engage SMEs in training: state the business case for training
2. Raising industry profile and desirability
3. Improve training outcomes and relevance through innovative delivery
4. Better/more cooperative engagement between providers and industry
5. Industry ownership of training outcomes and assessment

Priority Area 1: A Highly Skilled Workforce

- **Focus Area 1: Creating a more responsive training and learning system**
 - Training:
 - It is an unrealistic expectation that trainees graduates will be job ready on day one of employment
 - Tourism (as opposed to hospitality) students may not get hands on experience whilst training
 - Accountability varies by provider
 - Good providers:
 - consult with industry, employers, industry associations
 - have integrated their training with industry
 - tailor their courses to meet industry needs, including RPL
 - Overarching set of skills across tourism and hospitality employees: “sets of principles”
 - TAFE/training is being driven by international students
 - Training in the industry has high dropout rates
 - “Pre-selection” of students needed?

- People employed before qualifying?
 - Move to a short skill set training rather than qualification focus?
 - Short, sharp, inexpensive and business relevant: “makes the training more interesting”
 - Training in the workplace, especially for SMEs
 - “Lots of tired, old lecturers”
 - Trainers “bagging each other”: a bad look
 - Industry engagement is the issue: WA system tries to work with industry but is process not outcome based
 - System is slow to change and respond
 - Capital overhead: too much training infrastructure
 - A humorous “solution”: “close the TAFEs and put the good teachers in the industry”
 - Increase of time with “employers of choice”
- Industry Role:
 - Industry must own training: most skill delivery will happen at work
 - Industry/employers don’t want to train because employees will leave
 - How to sell training to SMEs?
 - Construction industry has their message well set: a good example of how a fragmented industry can work well together
 - Need to get “early results” with selected employers
 - Greater awareness/training needed amongst employers
 - For SME employers: what’s in it for me? (WIIFM) messages
 - Tourism WA campaign a positive
 - Campaign must include all players
 - How do you choose a training provider? Purely based on relationships: choose people who have an interest on the outcome of the training; look at consistency of course content
 - Our employers don’t understand what they are buying
 - “Bad training equates to a lack of industry involvement”
 - Tourism is not seen as a “real career”
 - Industry “centres of excellence” and skills alliances needed
 - Labour market reality will refocus on job based learning
- Assessment:
 - Must have consistent assessment processes consistently applied
 - Industry validation of assessment?
 - Build industry validation of assessment process from unit of competence level, moving competence by competence into industry validation of assessment
 - Industry owned assessment is the goal
 - “League ladders” are not the way: tend towards subjectivity and move away from quality systems
- Funding:
 - Trainers focused on most profitable courses
 - Need to consider direct financial benefits to employer/employee?
 - For generation Y training must equate to a tangible and immediate reward
 - Funding for training should be where the demand is
 - Under a voucher system, the industry would need to market to kids, parents, teachers and career counsellors

- State Agencies:
 - Utilise skills councils as industry support/lobby for training outcomes
 - Skills councils to identify and propagate best practice
- Data:
 - Training needs: better figures needed vs. other industries
 - Who is a tourism and hospitality employee? How are they defined?
 - More employer data needed
 - Data is not great for future training needs planning
 - Need to get graduate training data, both for decision makers and funding
- **Focus Area 2: Better recognition of learning and skills**
 - RPL is too difficult: too many barriers
 - RPL needs to be more accessible to employers: currently is too daunting
 - Training Providers don't know how to RPL
 - RPL should be assessed by other than trainers
 - Divorce RPL from training providers
 - RPL should be cheaper than doing the course
 - Best addressed by an industry based assessment, depending on the funding model
- **Focus Area 3: Accelerated pathways**
 - Some flexibility has been introduced, but not consistently applied
 - Lack of awareness and a lack of information from trainers
 - Ongoing communication needed from industry organisations
- **Focus Area 4: Focus on management and business skills**
 - Low entry barriers to new players entering the tourism and hospitality industry
 - Mandatory accreditation needed?
 - Flexible business/management training
 - Push towards higher qualifications (from skill sets) has some positives: increases capacity of managers and owner operators

Priority Area 2: Expanding the Traditional Workforce

Priority Area 3: Access to Quality Workplaces

Priority Area 4: Better Workforce Planning

- Better workforce planning is a mixed bag: some providers give “high value”
- Good providers “understand the business context”
- The William Angliss partnership model works, even remotely