

SERVICE SKILLS AUSTRALIA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



2008/09

Background

Service Skills Australia is the Industry Skills Council for the service industries. Service Skills Australia is a not-for-profit, independent organisation funded by the Australian Government to:

Develop, continuously improve and support the implementation of high quality, nationally recognised training products that respond to industry skills needs.

A key component of this role is the development, ongoing maintenance and implementation of industry training packages, which are the nationally endorsed frameworks that form the basis for developing, recognising and certifying skills in specific industries and sectors.

Stakeholder engagement is integral to Service Skills Australia's role in developing and implementing skills frameworks that meet industry needs. Service Skills Australia engages in open communication and broad, inclusive consultation with a diverse range of stakeholders.

Purpose of the stakeholder engagement strategy

This document describes and defines the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy for Service Skills Australia. It outlines the broad array of approaches used to generate effective communication and interaction between Service Skills Australia and its stakeholders - to facilitate engagement between our varying groups of stakeholders for the benefit of industry skills development.

The aims of the document are to:

- outline the objectives and principles for stakeholder engagement,
- define the strategic approach to stakeholder engagement,
- define the stakeholder groups, and
- identify the mechanisms for engaging these stakeholders.

This document will steer the activities of Service Skills Australia, and will guide the development of project-specific stakeholder engagement plans.

In framing the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, we have assumed that this document will evolve and changes to it will be ongoing, in response to input from all stakeholders.

Objectives of stakeholder engagement

The objectives of stakeholder engagement are to:

- provide stakeholders with accurate, timely and objective information, advice and assistance in relation to the purpose, use and implementation of training packages,
- provide stakeholders with accurate, timely and objective information, advice and assistance in relation to the national training system,
- obtain feedback and recommendations on the design of specific training packages and other products,
- obtain feedback and recommendations on industry and implementation issues impacting specific training packages and other products,
- obtain feedback and recommendations on priority areas for Service Skills Australia's projects and activities,
- build stakeholder relationships with Service Skills Australia,
- provide support and advice to stakeholders on the implementation training packages,
- raise awareness of training packages and VET - particularly the benefits for employers and how they can access skills development services, and
- ensure that stakeholders are listened to and that they have appropriate channels to provide feedback, raise ideas, issues or concerns, ask questions and find out more information.

Principles of stakeholder engagement

Service Skills Australia has developed a set of principles upon which we operate and can be held accountable. Service Skills Australia will ensure that its stakeholder engagement is:

Transparent

We will engage with stakeholders in an open process, with transparent purpose, goals, accountabilities, expectations and constraints. Service Skills Australia will be open about how stakeholder engagement will be used in decision-making.

Timely

We will engage with stakeholders to allow sufficient time for meaningful dialogue, consultation and modifications.

Inclusive

We will seek to engage with individuals and organisations that represent the full diversity of those who have a stake in, or will be affected by, our work. We will provide accessible electronic means to access information and participate in our activities. We will seek advice on equity issues from service industry-based stakeholders with experience in dealing with diverse workforces, including those with special needs. We will also access additional specialised advice from equity 'experts' on a needs basis.

Appropriate

We will use levels and methods of engagement that best suit both the group being consulted and the goals of the engagement.

Accessible

We will provide clear, timely, accessible and comprehensive information to stakeholders in order to facilitate their involvement with Service Skills Australia.

Balanced

We will attempt to balance the participation and influence of stakeholder groups, while clearly noting that the needs of industry are our primary focus.

Accountable

We will monitor the effectiveness of these stakeholder engagement strategies and implement improvements where needed.

Service Skills Australia's stakeholders

Service Skills Australia is committed to ongoing engagement with stakeholders. Our stakeholders are:

any individual or group which can affect, is affected by or has a stake in the exercise of the roles and responsibilities of Service Skills Australia in the national training system.

Service Skills Australia's stakeholders are a large and diverse group, with varied interests and investments in (the outcomes of the activities of) Service Skills Australia.

These include:

1. Industry; including both employers and employees across the full range of the service industries, as well as a range of membership bodies that represent the interests of these industries,
2. Registered training organisations (RTOs) and other service providers; organisations whose engagement with Service Skills is primarily as a vocational education and training (VET) service provider or supporting agency - delivering skills frameworks and associated programs to individuals and industry,
3. Industry regulators and government; including government bodies involved in regulating industry activities and the vocational education and training (VET) system; industry bodies responsible for registration and accreditation systems; government departments and government-funded research bodies designed to support planning, policy and program development for the benefit Australian industry, and
4. Other vocational education and training sector organisations, within Australia and internationally.

The classifications above represent a broad commonality of interest and relationship to the VET system: within each of these groups there may be a wide divergence of views and priorities. One of the key roles of Service Skills Australia is to facilitate constructive engagement between these groups, and to moderate and address their interests to inform the design of training packages and other services.

Strategic approach to working with stakeholders

Service Skills Australia has a vast range of stakeholders. To develop a strategic approach to engagement the range of stakeholders have been segmented according to the following factors:

Legitimacy: whether (or not) the body has a legitimate claim to be interested in or to exert influence over the activities of Service Skills Australia. This flows from the roles of these bodies in the national training system, and/or their role in representing industry interests.

Power: the extent to which the stakeholder has power to influence Service Skills Australia or vice versa – how influential Service Skills Australia is in the stakeholders' environment.

Alignment of interest: whether the issues of mutual interest are central to the exercise of Service Skills Australia's functions in the national training system.

The priority issues on which Service Skills Australia engages with each stakeholder will vary from stakeholder group to stakeholder group because of the diversity of their interests in the national training system. Thus, the basis of and mechanisms for that engagement will also vary. Accordingly, Service Skills Australia has developed a customised approach to its engagement with each stakeholder, based on the model in the table following.

The model for stakeholder engagement is based on a continuum of levels of engagement. This ranges from the less formal and basic level of engagement associated with the provision of information and general education, to the formal, high level of interaction associated with collaboration between the parties. The range of engagement activities expands upon the previous levels as stakeholders progress along the continuum.

Service Skills Australia's stakeholder engagement activities will encourage and support stakeholders to move to a higher level of engagement, as appropriate to their needs, interests and priorities.

A description of the levels of engagement and the strategies associated with each is provided in the table on the following page. Specific engagement methods for each stakeholder group are detailed in *Mechanisms for engaging with specific stakeholder groups*.

Levels of stakeholder engagement			
Information →	Consultation →	Involvement →	Collaboration
All stakeholders	Promoted and made available to all stakeholders	Targeted stakeholders with specific expertise and views on skill needs and implementation issues	Targeted stakeholders with specific representative roles, issues, expertise and capacity to influence skills development priorities
<p>To provide accurate, timely and relevant information and education to stakeholders.</p> <p>This level of engagement involves providing information about Service Skills Australia, our projects and products, and about the VET system in general.</p> <p>This is primarily one-way, broad-based communication, which also provide information on how stakeholders can obtain additional information, and move to a more active level of engagement.</p>	<p>To obtain input on training packages and related skills development issues.</p> <p>This level of engagement provides opportunities for stakeholders to provide information, voice their opinions, and articulate issues in response to specific projects and initiatives. Engagement may be driven by either Service Skills Australia or by stakeholders themselves.</p> <p>The results of this consultation will be examined and analysed, and may impact on the design of specific skills frameworks, and may inform the identification of future activities and projects.</p> <p>Consultation can also identify stakeholders who may be appropriate for more targeted involvement.</p>	<p>To seek out and receive the views of stakeholders on policies, programs or services that affect them directly or in which they may have a significant interest.</p> <p>This level provides opportunities for dialogue between stakeholders and Service Skills Australia, usually on a needs basis, driven by either a specific project or by the stakeholder's needs. This level of engagement will inform the design of specific skills frameworks, the identification of specific projects and activities, and the strategic directions for Service Skills Australia.</p>	<p>To work directly with stakeholders on strategic directions and implementation opportunities for Service Skills Australia.</p> <p>At this level, stakeholders will be actively engaged in specific Service Skills Australia activities on an ongoing basis, and may involve joint projects and initiatives to assist in meeting industry skill needs. This level of engagement will influence both specific products and strategic and encourage stakeholders to take responsibility for solutions.</p>
Strategies for stakeholder engagement			
<p>Websites</p> <p>Newsletter</p> <p>Publicity and advertising</p> <p>Information sessions</p> <p>Fact sheets, flyers and brochures</p> <p>Email and telephone advice</p>	<p>Surveys and questionnaires</p> <p>Focus Groups</p> <p>Written submissions</p> <p>Design Improvement Register</p>	<p>Targeted stakeholder meetings and interviews</p> <p>Focus groups and technical workshops</p> <p>Industry forums and think-tanks</p>	<p>Targeted stakeholder meetings and interviews</p> <p>Membership of specific committees (Industry Advisory Committees, RTO Reference Groups, project Industry Reference Groups/Steering Committees)</p> <p>Partnerships/collaboration on development and implementation projects designed to support industry skill needs</p> <p>Cooperative efforts to promote skills development products and services</p>

Mechanisms for engaging with specific stakeholder groups

1. Industry

The service industries comprise many stakeholders, including employers and the range of industry-based organisations and peak bodies established to further their interests, and employees and the organisations representing their interests. While the specific interests and priorities of these stakeholders are not always directly aligned, meaning that the outcomes of stakeholder engagement may vary, Service Skills proposes to apply a common methodology for engagement with industry stakeholders. The methods for engaging with these groups are discussed in the table below.

1.1 Enterprises: small, medium and large

Service Skills Australia seeks to engage enterprises within its coverage in order to:

- Provide support and assistance to enterprises which seek to navigate the national training system
- Gain enterprises' input on Training Packages and skills development issues within their industries, in order to inform the review and continuous improvement of these packages and additional initiatives required to support the service industries
- Build enterprises' commitment to skills development, with particular reference to nationally recognised training

In relation to enterprises, it is important to note that the service industries are extremely large, diverse and geographically dispersed, and include a large proportion of small business. An organisation with the limited resources of Service Skills Australia cannot feasibly engage in one-to-one relationship building with even a small percentage of these enterprises. Enterprises also vary widely in their resourcing and their level of knowledge, interest and commitment to skills development issues, and therefore in their capacity to become actively engaged in the work of Service Skills Australia.

A number of enterprises are currently engaged in the work of the Skills Council, through membership on the Board and/or Industry Advisory Committees, and on numerous National Industry Reference Groups and Project Steering Committees, as well as through targeted consultation conducted for specific projects.

1.2 Industry/employer associations

There are a large number of industry/employer associations within Service Skills Australia's coverage, ranging in role, membership numbers and influence. The most significant of these organisations are currently engaged in the work of the Skills Council, through membership on the Board and/or Industry Advisory Committees, and on numerous National Industry Reference Groups and Project Steering Committees, as well as through further targeted consultation conducted for specific projects.

1.3 Employee representative bodies

Service Skills Australia deals with a defined number of employee representative bodies, which provide input in relation to skills development on behalf of employees. Three of these unions are members of the Industry Advisory Committees.

1.4 Peak employer bodies

A number of peak employer bodies operate at a strategic level within the VET environment. These organisations typically represent the interests of corporate and association members, and exert significant influence on the direction of the VET sector through membership of bodies such as the National Quality Council and through advocacy and lobbying. These bodies also have varying views on the roles of Skills Councils, and the importance of engagement with Service Skills Australia.

Of these organisations, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Business Council of Australia (BCA) are the most significant to Service Skills Australia, several industry associations in the service industries are members of ACCI, and the enterprises are members of BCA.

Strategies for engagement with industry

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	All employers and employees in the service industries All industry/employer associations, employee representative organisations and peak bodies	Address industry events/conferences on skills development issues Provide skills development information through industry journals and other media Maintenance of information of specific relevance to industry on Service Skills Australia websites: <i>serviceskills.com.au</i> , <i>careersgateway.com.au</i> and <i>takingthelead.com.au</i> Provide telephone and email support service in response to queries Provide Plain English information on skills development and VET Profile and promote success stories through website and publications Conduct employer information sessions to promote skills development
Consultation	Available to all employers and employees in the service industries, all industry/employer associations, peak bodies and employee representative bodies	Maintenance of contact database Email newsletter distributed to subscribers, including promotion of opportunities to be involved in consultation Promote opportunities to participate in web-based project consultations and focus groups through industry publications Provide opportunities to comment on training packages, project reports and other skills issues through the Design Improvement Register
Involvement	Targeted employer associations Targeted employee representative bodies Targeted employers and enterprises Targeted industry equity group representatives Peak bodies	Provide opportunities for involvement in technical working groups, conferences, think-tanks, roundtables and forums Formal contact to explore industry skill needs and VET system issues; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact Actively seek involvement in projects through formal invitations to participate in consultation as relevant, and to distribute invitations to their industry networks and/or nominated members Broker solutions to their issues as required and appropriate Document and communicate their views and issues to government

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Collaboration	<p>Targeted employer associations</p> <p>Targeted employee representative bodies</p> <p>Targeted employers and enterprises</p> <p>Peak bodies</p>	<p>Representation on Service Skills Industry Advisory Committees, National Industry Reference Groups and other project-specific committees as appropriate</p> <p>Formal contact to explore industry skill needs and VET system issues; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact</p> <p>Explore opportunities for employer association support for Service Skills Australia activities, including provision of content for publications and distributing invitations to their nominated members</p> <p>Document and promote enterprises' successful implementation of skills development strategies</p> <p>Document and promote employees' successful use of skills development strategies</p> <p>Provide responses to their issues papers and research as appropriate</p> <p>Explore opportunities to partner on projects, and provide support to their projects as appropriate</p> <p>Participate in employer association conferences and events as appropriate</p>

2. Registered Training Organisations and other service providers

Registered Training Organisations represent a large and diverse group of stakeholders, including enterprises, TAFEs, private RTOs, Australian Technical Colleges, secondary schools and colleges, industry associations and community education providers.

These organisations also offer a diverse range of services, including VET in schools programs, training for Australian Apprenticeships under User Choice, assessment-only services, delivery of fee-for-service training as full qualifications or short courses leading to a Statement of Attainment. Some organisations also deal with specific client groups such as overseas students, people with a disability, indigenous learners and school students.

Other VET service providers, such as Australian Apprenticeship Centres and group training organisations provide specific services to clients within the system, and interact closely with RTOs in a range of areas. For this reason, they are also included within this category.

These organisations are ultimately charged with implementing industry skills frameworks. They are critical to the successful implementation of high-quality skills development that meets the needs of industry. Service Skills Australia seeks to support these organisations in their work, and to build their understanding of, and commitment to, delivering on the industry skill needs and associated quality guidelines articulated in training packages.

Strategies for engagement with Registered Training Organisations and other service providers

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	<p>All current and prospective RTOs delivering programs for the service industries</p> <p>Australian Apprenticeship Centres</p> <p>Group training organisations</p>	<p>Address VET events/conferences on skills development issues and maintenance and implementation of Training Packages</p> <p>Provide development, maintenance and implementation information through VET publications</p> <p>Maintenance of information of specific relevance to RTOs on Service Skills</p> <p>Australia websites: <i>serviceskills.com.au</i>, <i>careersgateway.com.au</i> and <i>takingthelead.com.au</i></p> <p>Provide telephone and email support service in response to queries</p> <p>Provision of information materials designed to support users implementing Training Packages</p> <p>Promotion of RTO good practice and innovation through website and publications</p> <p>Promote and distribute training packages and support materials</p>
Consultation	<p>Available to all RTOs delivering programs for the service industries</p> <p>Australian Apprenticeship Centres</p> <p>Group Training Organisations</p>	<p>Maintenance of contact database</p> <p>Email newsletter distributed to subscribers, including promotion of opportunities to be involved in consultation</p> <p>Promote opportunities to participate in web-based project consultations and focus groups through VET publications</p> <p>Provide opportunities to comment on training packages, project reports and other skills issues through the Design Improvement Register</p> <p>Conduct RTO information sessions to discuss training packages and projects</p>

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Involvement	<p>Targeted public and private RTOs</p> <p>Targeted enterprise RTOs</p> <p>Australian Technical Colleges</p> <p>Australian Apprenticeships Training (AAT) Information Service</p> <p>Group Training Australia</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for involvement in technical working groups, conferences, think-tanks, roundtables and forums as appropriate</p> <p>Formal contact to explore their implementation and VET system issues; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact as appropriate</p> <p>Actively seek involvement in projects through formal invitations to participate in consultation as relevant, and to distribute invitations to their industry networks and/or nominated members where relevant</p> <p>Develop professional development materials and deliver interactive workshops to support RTOs in using and implementing training packages</p> <p>Broker solutions to their issues as required and appropriate</p> <p>Document and communicate their views and issues to government and industry as appropriate</p>
Collaboration	<p>Targeted enterprise RTOs</p> <p>Peak RTO bodies</p> <p>Targeted public and private RTOs</p> <p>Developers of training package support materials</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for RTO representation on Service Skills RTO Reference Groups and project Reference Groups, in accordance with <i>Protocols for ISC Engagement with RTO Peak Bodies</i></p> <p>Formal contact to explore their implementation and VET system issues; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact as appropriate</p> <p>Document and promote their successful implementation of skills development strategies where appropriate</p> <p>Provide responses to their issues papers and research as appropriate</p> <p>Work cooperatively with AAT Information Service to ensure currency and accuracy of content relating to Service Skills Training Packages</p> <p>Maintain engagement in line with any developments arising from <i>Protocols for ISC Engagement with RTO Peak Bodies</i></p>

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
		<p>Explore opportunities to provide information and support to their projects as appropriate</p> <p>Explore opportunities to distribute quality support materials developed by organisations other than Service Skills Australia</p>

3. Government bodies and industry regulators

3.1 Government regulators and industry registration/licensing authorities

Government regulators are significant to the work of Service Skills because of the impacts that regulatory and licensing regimes exert on skills development, particularly in relation to recognition of skills across the states and territories.

A number of industry-managed registration and accreditation schemes also operate within the service industries. While these are industry based and not necessarily reflected in legislation, they have similar strategic importance to the work of Service Skills Australia. The wide acceptance of many of these schemes, which may also be reflected in insurance requirements for enterprises, means that in practice these have significant influence and importance in relation to industry skills frameworks and the VET system.

The key objectives of engagement with these bodies are:

- to ensure that Service Skills Australia's information on regulation, licensing and industry-based accreditation and registration schemes remains up-to-date and is accurately reflected in its training packages, and
- to negotiate alignment of regulation and accreditation schemes with training package requirements where possible, in line with COAG priorities.

Strategies for engagement with government regulators and industry registration/licensing authorities

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	All regulators All industry registration/ accreditation schemes	Address government, industry and CRC events/conferences on skills development issues as appropriate Maintain Service Skills Australia website Subscribe to stakeholders' newsletters and monitor websites for information updates Provide skills development information through industry journals and other media Provide telephone and email service in response to queries
Consultation	All regulators All industry registration/ accreditation schemes	Maintenance of contact database Email newsletter distributed to subscribers, including promotion of opportunities to be involved in consultation Promote opportunities to participate in web-based project consultations and focus groups through industry publications Provide opportunities to comment on training packages, project reports and other skills issues through the Design Improvement Register
Involvement	Targeted regulators Targeted industry registration/ accreditation schemes	Provide opportunities for involvement in technical working groups, conferences, think-tanks, roundtables and forums as appropriate Formal contact to explore industry skill and VET system issues as they relate to regulation, licensing and registration systems; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact as appropriate Formal contact to explore industry skill and VET system issues as they relate to broader government initiatives; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact as appropriate Actively seek involvement in projects through formal invitations to participate in consultation as relevant, and to

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
		<p>distribute invitations to their broader networks where relevant</p> <p>Approach specific regulators and registration/accreditation bodies for input and advice to inform development of skills frameworks as required</p> <p>Broker solutions to their issues as required and appropriate</p>
Collaboration	Targeted regulators Targeted industry registration/ accreditation schemes	<p>Provide representation on Industry Advisory Committees, National Industry Reference Groups and other committees as appropriate</p> <p>Ensure we have current, accurate information on regulation and licensing, and document in advice to stakeholders as appropriate</p> <p>Ensure we have current, accurate information on registration schemes, and document in advice to stakeholders as appropriate</p> <p>Provide information in training packages and associated VET system issues to inform stakeholders of any reviews of regulation, licensing and registration as required</p> <p>Provide responses to their issues papers and research as appropriate</p> <p>Conduct formal negotiations to harmonise licensing schemes with training packages</p> <p>Conduct formal negotiations to harmonise industry registration/accreditation schemes with training packages</p>

3.2 State/territory training authorities

The state and territory training authorities are an additional critical stakeholder involved in the implementation of industry skills frameworks. While the national training system is designed to build national consistency, the states and territories retain primary responsibility for administering vocational education and training within their boundaries. This includes including managing funding related to training provision, registering training organisations, monitoring these organisations to ensure compliance with Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards, managing the processes for implementation of training packages, and accrediting courses. These organisations are also a key player in the training package endorsement process.

The key objective of engagement with the state and territory training authorities is to foster a strong relationship based on mutual understanding of the priorities of industry and state government. This understanding will assist the development of training packages and associated products which can be successfully implemented in a manner that meets industry needs.

Strategies for engagement with state and territory training authorities

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	All state/territory training authorities and individual personnel	<p>Address VET events/conferences on skills development issues and maintenance and implementation of training packages</p> <p>Provide development, maintenance and implementation information through VET publications</p> <p>Maintenance of information of specific relevance to RTOs on Service Skills Australia websites: <i>serviceskills.com.au</i>, <i>careersgateway.com.au</i> and <i>takingthelead.com.au</i></p> <p>Provide telephone and email support service to respond to queries</p> <p>Provision of information materials designed to support users implementing training packages</p> <p>Promotion of RTO good practice and innovation through website and publications</p> <p>Promote and distribute training packages and support materials</p>

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Consultation	Available to all state/territory training authorities and individual personnel	<p>Maintenance of contact database</p> <p>Email newsletter distributed to subscribers, including promotion of opportunities to be involved in consultation</p> <p>Promote opportunities to participate in web-based project consultations and focus groups through VET publications</p> <p>Provide opportunities to comment on training packages, project reports and other skills issues through the Design Improvement Register</p>
Involvement	Targeted state/territory training authorities, program areas and personnel	<p>Provide opportunities for involvement in technical working groups, conferences, think-tanks, roundtables and forums as appropriate</p> <p>Formal contact to explore their implementation and VET system issues; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact as appropriate</p> <p>Actively seek involvement in projects through formal invitations to participate in consultation as relevant, and to distribute invitations to their RTO networks where relevant</p> <p>Broker solutions to their issues as required and appropriate</p> <p>Document and communicate their views and issues to industry as appropriate</p>
Collaboration	All state/territory training authorities; specific targeted program areas and personnel	<p>Provide opportunities for STA representation on Service Skills project Reference Groups</p> <p>Formal contact to explore implementation and issues with specific training packages; including meetings, interviews and telephone or email contact as appropriate</p> <p>Provide responses to issues papers and research as appropriate</p> <p>Participate in DEST Technical Workshops</p> <p>Seek opportunities to work with and brief auditors</p> <p>Seek opportunities to provide advice and input into implementation strategies</p> <p>Seek opportunities to gather information on implementation initiatives, to support Service Skills Australia's advice to RTOs and</p>

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
		industry Seek opportunities to deliver Professional Development sessions for RTOs in conjunction with STAs Explore opportunities to provide information and support to their projects as appropriate

3.3 Government departments and government-funded research bodies

A number of Commonwealth and state and territory government departments and government-funded organisations designed to support industry and workforce development are also Service Skills stakeholders. These departments include those concerned with immigration, employment relations, career advice, small business, tourism and sport and recreation. Their initiatives and policies potentially impact on industry skills frameworks and implementation strategies. In turn Service Skills Australia's expertise in relation to industry skills frameworks and the national VET system may also usefully inform these initiatives.

Research bodies are another stakeholder group with relevance and importance to the work of Service Skills Australia. Access to quality, timely intelligence on industry issues and VET sector statistics provides a valuable underpinning for Service Skills Australia's work. In addition to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), the Australian Government also funds two Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) with links to the service industries: Sustainable Tourism and Desert Knowledge.

Relationships with these departments and organisations will be serviced on a needs basis, determined largely by the range of projects being undertaken by both Service Skills Australia and these bodies, and by specific policy and program developments within these portfolio areas.

Strategies for engagement with government departments and research bodies

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	State and Commonwealth Government departments corresponding to Service Skills coverage, industry development and workforce planning NCVER Cooperative Research Centres DITR, DEWR, DIMA and Career Advice Australia as appropriate	Address government, industry and CRC events/conferences on skills development issues as appropriate Maintain Service Skills Australia website Subscribe to newsletters and monitor websites for information updates Provide skills development information through industry journals and other media Provide telephone and email service to respond to queries

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Consultation	State and Commonwealth Government departments corresponding to Service Skills coverage, industry development and workforce planning NCVER Cooperative Research Centres DITR, DEWR, DIMA and Career Advice Australia as appropriate	Maintenance of contact database Email newsletter distributed to subscribers, including promotion of opportunities to be involved in consultation Promote opportunities to participate in web-based project consultations and focus groups through industry publications Provide opportunities to comment on training packages, project reports and other skills issues through the Design Improvement Register
Involvement	State and Commonwealth Government departments corresponding to Service Skills coverage, industry development and workforce planning NCVER Cooperative Research Centres DITR, DEWR, DIMA and Career Advice Australia as appropriate	Provide opportunities for involvement in technical working groups, conferences, think-tanks, roundtables and forums as appropriate Actively seek involvement in projects through formal invitations to participate in consultation as relevant, and to distribute invitations to their broader networks where relevant Approach specific government departments for input and advice to inform development of skills frameworks as required Broker solutions to their issues as required and appropriate
Collaboration	State and Commonwealth Government departments corresponding to Service Skills coverage, industry development and workforce planning NCVER Cooperative Research Centres DITR, DEWR, DIMA and Career Advice Australia as appropriate	Provide representation on Industry Advisory Committees, National Industry Reference Groups and other committees as appropriate Formal contact as required to explore industry skill and VET system issues as they relate to broader government initiatives; including meetings, one-to-one interviews and telephone or email contact as appropriate Provide responses to their issues papers and research as appropriate Explore opportunities to provide information and support to government initiatives and research projects related to industry skills development Explore opportunities to partner on research projects related to skills development for the service industries

4. Other VET sector organisations

4.1 National Quality Council, Skills Australia and other critical VET bodies

The framework for the new national training system requires Industry Skills Councils to engage with key bodies in the system, including the National Quality Council, Skills Australia and others as required.

Further specific details on the engagement with these bodies will be determined in the context of specific requests, the development of formal protocols, and policies around the operation of Skills Australia.

Strategies for engagement with National Quality Council, Skills Australia and other critical VET bodies

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	Skills Australia NQC	<p>Provide development, maintenance and implementation information through VET publications</p> <p>Maintenance of information on Service Skills Australia websites</p> <p>Monitor websites for information updates</p> <p>Provide telephone and email service to respond to queries</p> <p>Circulation of Service Skills Australia information to Skills Australia and NQC members as appropriate</p> <p>Service Skills email newsletter distributed to subscribers</p> <p>Circulation of Skills Australia and NQC information, communiques and newsletters to Service Skills Australia stakeholders as appropriate</p>
Consultation	Skills Australia NQC	As defined by Skills Australia and NQC
Involvement	Skills Australia NQC	<p>As defined by Skills Australia and NQC</p> <p>Provide opportunities to address conferences, think-tanks, roundtables and forums as appropriate</p> <p>Document and communicate Skills Australia and NQC policies, views and issues to industry as appropriate</p> <p>Address Skills Australia and NQC on Service Skills Australia activities as invited</p>

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Collaboration	Skills Australia NQC	<p>As defined by Skills Australia and NQC</p> <p>Provide advice and input into policy development as appropriate</p> <p>Seek opportunities to gather information on Skills Australia and NQC policy initiatives, to support Service Skills Australia's advice to RTOs and industry</p> <p>Explore opportunities to provide information and support to their work as appropriate</p>

4.2 State/territory industry advisory arrangements

State and territory industry advisory arrangements are funded by state and territory governments to support the implementation of training packages and provide industry advice to government within the state or territory. The funding and organisation of these arrangements varies across Australia. Some states do not fund industry advisory bodies in their jurisdiction, and some provide funding only for selected sectors, not the full range of industries within Service Skills Australia's coverage. Across states and territories industry coverage also varies; Service Skills Australia typically engages with more than one body in each state and territory, and many of the state and territory bodies are required to deal with several national Industry Skills Councils.

Where they exist, these organisations are part of an established 'Service Skills' network, which has been developed over several years. These organisations are important to the work of Service Skills Australia because of their recognised role within the state and territory VET system, and their local industry and RTO networks, which means they are a valuable conduit to stakeholders within their state and territory. They are able to facilitate the work of Service Skills Australia and increase national consistency in the implementation of training packages.

Strategies for engagement with state and territory industry advisory arrangements

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	All	<p>Maintenance of information on Service Skills Australia websites, and allow use of this information on state and territory sites as requested</p> <p>Provide telephone and email support service to respond to queries</p> <p>Facilitate information exchange through a quarterly network newsletter</p>
Consultation	All	<p>Maintenance of contact database</p> <p>Email newsletter distributed to subscribers, including promotion of opportunities to be involved in consultation</p> <p>Promote opportunities to participate in web-based project consultations and focus groups through industry publications</p> <p>Provide opportunities to comment on training packages, project reports and other skills issues through the Design Improvement Register</p>

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Involvement	All	<p>Provide opportunities for involvement in technical working groups, conferences, think-tanks, roundtables and forums as appropriate</p> <p>Actively seek involvement in projects through formal invitations to participate in consultation as relevant, and to distribute invitations to their industry and RTO networks where relevant</p> <p>Broker solutions to their issues as required and appropriate</p>
Collaboration	All	<p>Establish an intranet site for information sharing between network members</p> <p>Network meetings held twice a year</p> <p>Provide opportunities for them to promote their projects through the Service Skills e-newsletter</p> <p>Establish formal protocols for consulting with them, including distribution of drafts at key project stages</p> <p>Utilise their networks for project consultations, launches and information sessions and professional development workshops</p> <p>Provide representation on National Industry Reference Groups and other project-specific committees as appropriate</p> <p>Explore opportunities to partner on projects, and provide support to their projects as appropriate</p> <p>Participate in network conferences and events as appropriate</p>

4.3 International standards development bodies

A number of other countries also have organisations responsible for developing and maintaining the industry skills standards in that country. Service Skills Australia's engagement with these standards development bodies provides a mechanism to support information exchange, identify best practice and benchmark Australian skills standards against overseas models. Collaboration with these bodies also provides an opportunity to facilitate the recognition of qualifications across international boundaries, to support the mobility of skilled workers, in turn helping to address local industry skills needs.

Strategies for engagement with international standards development bodies

Level of engagement	Who	Engagement methods
Information	All	Maintenance of information on Service Skills Australia websites Provide telephone and email service to respond to queries
Consultation	All	Maintenance of contact database Email newsletter distributed to subscribers, including promotion of opportunities to be involved in consultation Provide copies of relevant reports, drafts Provide opportunities to comment on Training Packages, project reports and other skills issues through the Design Improvement Register
Involvement	Targeted international skills development bodies/networks	Participate in major international events
Collaboration	Targeted international skills development bodies/networks	Participate in and facilitate international mapping activities aimed at recognition of qualifications