

14<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Mr David Hind  
Chair,  
The Board of Skills Tasmania

## **MANAGEMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN TASMANIA**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Skilling Tasmania Discussion Paper calling for submissions from industry and other clients of the training system and training providers on the management of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Tasmania.

### **The Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council (TFIC)**

The Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council (TFIC) is the peak body for the whole of the Tasmanian seafood industry. Its primary role is to promote and protect the interests of all those involved in the industry, that is, aquaculture, processing and wild catch.

TFIC provides for effective communication between all sections of the seafood industry, government, both state and national, other key stakeholders and the wider community.

TFIC represents the interests of more than 600 commercial fishers, over 90 fish processors and in excess of 180 marine farmers who operate 217 marine farm leases. These members currently catch and produce approximately 27,200 tonnes of product valued in excess of AUD\$367 million annually.

### **TFIC's position regarding the current management of VET in Tasmania**

The training needs of the Tasmanian Seafood Industry are not being adequately met through the current State VET funding framework.

TFIC therefore seeks a review of the current framework of VET funding and the allocation of those funds for the following reasons:

- The Tasmanian Seafood Industry does not access training through TAFE institutions, which attract 80% (approx.) of State VET funding, but entirely through two RTOs who tender for State Government subsidies of Seafood Industry training courses through the Competitive Bids allocation, which accounts for just 10% (approx.) of State VET; and
- Given the value and the contribution of the seafood industry to Tasmania, there appears to be inequity in the allocation of subsidised funding places for seafood industry employees;
- Moreover, the subsidised funding allocated to seafood training courses does not reflect the differentially high cost of conducting training for the seafood industry;

- The annual TasSkills/Competitive Bids process through which the two RTOs servicing the seafood industry acquire funding to deliver subsidised training is slow and uncondusive to long-term planning and investment by the two RTOs, and therefore uncondusive to optimum delivery of seafood industry training needs; and
- The exclusive allocation of subsidised training for a particular skill set/qualification to one RTO does not necessarily lead to productive outcomes for seafood industry employers and employees who are trying to gain access to flexible, rather than fixed, delivery of training to employees.

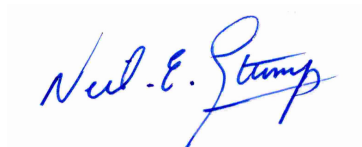
### **TFIC's preferred VET funding & delivery models**

As such, TFIC endorses the re-structuring of the current VET funding and delivery framework to develop a new framework which is aligned with prioritised seafood industry training needs.

The following changes to the current VET framework are sought:

- An increase in the proportional allocation of VET funding to training delivery models utilised by the Seafood Industry (ie. RTOs) in recognition of the size and increasing contribution of the Seafood Industry to the Tasmanian economy;
- Development and communication of a transparent processes of allocating VET funding according to industry & employee prioritised needs;
- Consultation with peak bodies within the Tasmanian Seafood Industry as to priorities, relevancies and efficiencies of subsidised vocational qualifications; and
- Implementation of open-market VET delivery models which would provide the flexibility and cost-effectiveness required by the Seafood Industry.

Yours sincerely,



Neil Stump  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE