

Industry Training Federation

Briefing to the Incoming Minister for
Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment



Education, Skills and Employment – Driving Economic Development

Industry Training is a key part of the Vocational Education and Training system and is a sector well positioned to support the Government's economic growth agenda and social objectives.

This briefing:

- outlines some of the challenges and opportunities that the sector faces and offers solutions to how the sector and government might support each other for the benefit of New Zealand;
- shows how industry training offers value for investment to government, industry, employers, and workers;
- examines the core roles of Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) and how they support skill development.

The Industry Training Federation (ITF) is a voluntary member organisation that all Industry Training Organisations belong to. It focuses on policy development, advocacy, sector leadership and supporting the work of ITOs.

Challenges and opportunities for the next three years

The industry training sector is undergoing significant change. While many of the challenges have been tough on ITOs they also present opportunities to create a high performing industry training and Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

Key challenges/opportunities include:

- The Review of Industry Training
- Improving performance
- The number of ITOs
- The Targeted Review of Qualifications
- Partnership across VET
- ITO Governance
- Vocational Pathways & working with schools

The Review of Industry Training

The Government is undertaking a review of industry training to ensure the sector is designed to encourage good outcomes for employers and trainees.

The ITF welcomes the review but believes it needs to look at outcomes that focus on partnerships across the VET sector. Doing this will ensure the entire sector is centred around the needs of the learner and is better placed to support the Government's economic and social aspirations.

Changes to the system will need to include changes to funding incentives to support better collaboration across all partners in the VET system.

The ITF will continue to work constructively with government to ensure a positive outcome for New Zealand Inc. from the review.

Improving performance

The Government has sought to get better results from its investment in industry training by introducing new operational rules.

ITOs are continually looking at ways to improve performance. From 2009 to 2010, the number of credits achieved by trainees (as a proportion of the credits they enrolled in) increased from 50% to 65%. Programme completions increased from 41% to 55% over the same period. The ITF recognises that there are still gains to be made in this area and is committed to work with the sector to continue to improve performance in an effective and efficient manner.

While the operational changes have encouraged this process, ongoing ways to improve performance began well before those changes. The Federation supported this with work in 2008 that looked at options for what high performing ITOs look like.

ITOs are improving their performance in a number of ways. ITOs have made significant changes to their administrative and reporting procedures in line with new operational policies and the Industry Training Register. They have also developed different approaches to improve performance that best suit their industry.

The ITF has made clear public statements that it does not condone poor performance and will continue to work with all ITOs to share best practice and ensure better outcomes for industry.

The number of ITOs

The Government has a policy to simplify and strengthen the VET system to gain efficiencies by encouraging ITOs to amalgamate.

There is considerable support among industry for fewer ITOs and a number of ITOs have already merged or are involved in discussions around mergers.

The ITF supports moves by industry to look at the issue of ITO coverage in a strategic manner rather than ad-hoc responses. The ITF will also lead initiatives to share good practice so that members are able to learn from each other's experiences.

The ITF believes that the government should show their support for the merger process by not unduly penalising ITOs that merge. For example, this could involve the Tertiary Education Commission and merging ITOs working together to develop interim educational performance indicator targets.

The Targeted Review of Qualifications

ITOs and the ITF have been working with NZQA on the Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ) following the 2008-09 review that found that the qualifications system was difficult for learners, employers and industry to understand because it:

- was not relevant to some employers and industry
- was not user-friendly, and the status of qualifications was unclear
- led to the proliferation of similar qualifications that made distinguishing between qualifications and identifying education/ career pathways difficult.

Implementing changes as part of the review has so far been worthwhile and ITOs remain committed to the process. In particular, the process has changed the core focus of qualification development away from provider and ITO needs to industry needs.

Overall there have been significant reductions in the numbers of qualifications as a result of mandatory qualification reviews, with reductions for individual industries ranging up to 97%.

An example of how this affects individual industries is the establishment of two New Zealand Diplomas in Aviation (Aeroplane and Helicopter), which replace 28 pilot qualifications. An ITF member, ATTTO, facilitated bringing together a wide range of stakeholders to achieve this change.

In its review of industry training, the Government needs to recognise the positive changes that are already occurring as part of the TRoQ, particularly the way the process has mitigated the perceived tension between ITOs standard setting and arranging delivery functions.

The ITF would like to discuss this directly with the Minister at his earliest convenience.

Partnerships across VET

The ITF recognises that industry training is part of a wider VET system and that various parts of the VET system need to work more closely together to leverage both Government's and industry's investment in skill development. This includes partnership with providers like schools and polytechnics as well as with industry.

The ITF believes that increased collaboration across the VET sector and the development of VET-wide plans, led by ITOs, will strengthen all ITO roles and provide the Government with sector wide information about industry demand and training supply when making funding decisions.

For 2012, ITF public events will all carry the theme Partnership at Work and will be encompassing professional development opportunities and shared best practice within the VET system. These events will highlight successful VET partnerships.

Governance of ITOs

ITOs are owned by their industries and as such operate under a number of different models. While that is one of the systems key strengths, it is also a weakness.

ITOs have industry representatives on their governance boards. While this model brings a lot of industry specific knowledge, it can also result in little specific governance knowledge. Currently there is little/no training provided to ITO board members on governance.

The ITF seeks to work with the government, industry and ITOs to improve the governance skills on ITO boards to ensure they have the skills required for ITOs to be high performing and meet the needs of their industry.

Vocational Pathways

The ITF has advocated strongly for a way to ensure that secondary school students (particularly

the 70% of students who do not go to university) have clearer pathways from school to tertiary education, training and the world of work. In 2010, the ITF and ITOs developed and promoted the concept of vocational pathways as a way to link the secondary school programme more closely to the needs of industry. In 2011, the Government picked up this work as part of its Youth Guarantee.

ITOs continue to work with the Ministry of Education to develop vocational pathways and the ITF is working with Business New Zealand to raise understanding of this initiative among industry and the wider business community.

The ITF urges the Government to continue to support Vocational Pathways implementation and communicate the structure and benefits clearly to schools, parents, and industry. The ITF is interested in working with the Government to achieve this objective.

Working with schools

More widely, ITOs carry out a number of activities with secondary schools to assist the senior secondary school system to provide a range of learning opportunities and pathways for young people.

Most of these activities have been largely resourced by industry alone, without any government assistance. However as the labour demands have eased over the past few years, there has been a decrease in some school related activities.

As outcomes sought by Government widen, particularly in the area of youth guarantee, there is scope for more partnership work with ITOs.

The Government needs to consider ways in which ITOs can be funded to continue work with schools to support its Youth Guarantee. The ITF is interested in helping government achieve this objective.

How Industry Training Adds Value

This section shows how industry training offers value for investment to government, industry, employers and workers.

BERL Report

The ITF recently commissioned BERL to conduct research into the Economic Costs and Benefits of Industry Training.

Modelling exercises undertaken by BERL indicate that if there were a reduction in industry training funding, there would be a significant negative impact on the economy.

Using the BERL model of the New Zealand economy, a loss of all public funding of industry training results in:

- A short-term loss in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of between 0.6 and 1.8 percent – equating to between \$1.2 and \$3.7 billion annually – depending on the extent to which industry funding of training also declines.
- A longer-term loss in GDP of between 2.9 and 6 percent, equating to between \$7.2 and \$15.1 billion.
- Export sectors being impacted the most, as export volume losses amount to between 8 and 19 percent over the longer term.

Furthermore, the research also points to how important it is to invest in training at all levels of the workforce. Training at the lower end of the skills spectrum makes a huge difference to driving the productivity of a workplace.

“BERL’s research confirms that industry training is not only of value to the economy, but that it is closely aligned to New Zealand’s export efforts and the Government’s Economic Growth Agenda.” BERL Chief Economist Dr Ganesh Nana.

This perspective only represents projected economic losses to the economy from a lack of and/or decrease of public investment in industry training. There are also significant social costs of not having a skilled workforce and conversely social benefits that are gained by individuals completing vocational training.

The cost of completions

Industry contribution to industry training means that ITOs are able to deliver value in terms of the cost per completion of qualifications.

While there has been considerable discussion over the past two years about the level of performance among industry trainees, it is important to note that the average cost to taxpayers of each qualification completion arranged by an ITO is \$5,600. This compares favourably with the average cost per qualification completion at polytechnics and private providers of more than \$20,000¹.

Additionally, industry training doesn’t add to the burden of the student loan scheme, which costs taxpayers around \$800 million a year.

Literacy and numeracy

Research consistently indicates that at least 20% of the New Zealand workforce lacks the literacy and numeracy skills required to lift productivity. ITOs are actively involved in implementing initiatives to improve the skills of the workforce.

A key focus of this work has been embedding literacy and numeracy learning into wider training materials. This enables trainees/learners to develop transferable literacy and numeracy skills within the context of their learning environment. A goal of this is to ensure the skills gained are life-long and sustainable. While the focus is on workplace literacy, there is considerable anecdotal evidence to suggest that there is wider flow-on social and personal benefits.

1. Review of Costs per Completion calculations (BERL 2010)

To help improve adult literacy and numeracy levels in the workforce, most ITOs assess their trainees/learners literacy and numeracy skills. They are using the TEC Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool to gauge literacy and numeracy levels and identify whether assistance is required to improve skills.

The ongoing challenge for ITOs, and for government, is to ensure that the considerable progress that has been made in integrating literacy and numeracy learning into industry training is maintained and is measurable.

The core roles of ITOs and how they support skill development

In this section we provide more detail on the core roles of ITOs and how they complement and support vocational education and training in New Zealand.

The ITF has recently made a submission on the discussion paper that is part of the Government's Review of Industry Training.

It covers the three core roles of ITOs under the Industry Training Act 1992:

- Arranging and delivery of training
- Setting standards and developing qualifications
- Industry skills leadership

One issue crossing all three current roles of an ITO is funding. At the moment the government essentially funds all three roles through the arranging of training role. The ITF strongly urges the government to consider discrete funding streams for all three roles that an ITO performs. This would enable greater transparency of funding, and greater transparency as well as

improved certainty about funding levels for each role. Furthermore, if changes were to be made to the functions of an ITO at a later date, it would ensure that each role was adequately funded with clear funding expectations.

Arranging the delivery of training

This is the most widely understood role of ITOs, and the one that government invests directly in. ITOs are seen by their industries as specialists in securing the supply of skilled workers that meet industry standards, and that means arranging appropriate contexts for learning and assessment that will develop all the skills a trainee needs.

The ITF urges the Government to make the most of ITOs' expertise in this area.

We believe ITOs, as a result of their independence relative to providers and government and their strong links with industry, are best placed to arrange the delivery of training. Further, the arranging role is crucial for ITOs to maintain links with industry that are needed to inform setting standards and industry skills leadership.

One aspect of the arranging role that we believe does need to be addressed is funding. ITPs and other providers receive roughly double the funding that ITOs receive for the same volume of training. This difference is well known and can impact on the mode of training arranged.

The ITF strongly recommends that for ITOs to best meet the needs of trainees and employers there should be neutrality of funding, measurement, and regulation across different forms of VET. For example, where industry training is best delivered through a provider, that part of the training should be funded at the provider rate.

Setting standards and developing qualifications

Industry standards ensure that while skill development benefits firms and employees, it also benefits the industry and nation. ITOs have a strong understanding of what standards are required for their industries so are ideally placed to lead the development of skill standards and qualifications for their industries.

The ITF also recognises that providers have good links with industry at a regional level and make a valuable contribution in this space. To utilise this contribution and to limit the potential for undue proliferation the ITF advocates for a consortia model approach for the development of standards. This approach would be led by ITOs but with involvement by stakeholders and underpinned by the proposed VET-wide plans for the sectors.

Industry skills leadership

ITOs are uniquely placed to fulfil the role of determining their industry's skills and training needs. They have a strong understanding of the needs of their industries and play an important intermediary role between industry, education and government.

While ITOs are best placed to fulfil this role, they can't do it in isolation. Industry Skills Leadership is most effective when ITOs work collaboratively with industry, tertiary providers, government, other stakeholders and each other to determine skill needs and plan how best to respond to those needs.

For ITOs to truly determine their industry's skills and training needs they need to be given the power to lead the process and have binding input from key stakeholders. This would enable the development of ITO led VET wide sector plans for their sectors. These plans would provide a strong platform for ITOs to fulfil their standards setting and qualification roles and enable the government to make informed investment decisions based on industry demand and VET supply.

Over the past few years, ITOs have responded to the industry skills leadership challenge in a range of ways. These include smarter forecasting methods, workforce development initiatives, and programmes to reduce skill shortages and improve productivity in the workforce so that businesses can survive and flourish. Skills leadership also includes developing clearer pathways for career development, and working with the secondary school sector to provide better information and programmes for school leavers to make career decisions.

More and more, ITOs are collaborating with each other on ways to maximise their industry skills leadership role.

An example of this is the **Built Environment Skills Strategy**: developed by the BETA group of ITOs in collaboration with industry groups, the wider VET sector and government. This strategy sets out a skills vision for the sector over the next 10 years and outlines how skills can help address the sectors productivity challenge.

Conclusion

The ITF has noted the Prime Minister's recent decision to include tertiary education, skills and employment in one portfolio.

We also note that the same Minister has responsibility for economic development and believe this link is also important.

The ITF believes that this illustrates the Government's desire to get greater value from the outcomes of tertiary education so that funding spent on vocational education and training leads to skills and jobs and helps drive economic development.

We look forward to supporting the Government's goals in this area.

Appendix 1 - About Industry Trainees

Over the last few years, around 180,000 workers have been registered as industry trainees² each year.

Of these about two-thirds are male and one-third female. A third of trainees are 20-29 years old while around 40% of trainees are over 40-years-old. There is high participation in industry training among Maori and Pasifika in relation to their participation in the workforce. Sixteen per cent of industry trainees are Maori (compared to 11% of the workforce) and 7% of industry trainees are Pasifika (compared to 5% of the workforce). Of those whose previous qualifications are known, 21% have no qualifications and another 20% no higher than NCEA level 1³.

With the economic downturn, it is likely that Maori and Pacific trainee numbers, and younger trainees, are proportionately lower in 2011 than in 2010, and this is an area that many ITOs are developing strategies to address.

2. Figures for 2011 are not yet available and the expectation is that numbers will have decreased.

3. Based on 2010 data

Appendix 2 – The Industry Training Federation

The Industry Training Federation is a voluntary member organisation that all ITOs belong to.

The Federation seeks a skilled and productive New Zealand through work in four areas: strategic policy, government relations, industry/sector relations and sector performance.

The Wellington-based secretariat includes 3 full-time and 3 part-time staff and is funded through a mixture of member levies, contract work, and event management. Its Chief Executive is Mark Oldershaw.

The ITF Board is primarily made up of a mixture of Chief Executives and Governors of ITOs, who are elected at the Annual General Meeting for a two-year term. It also includes a representative nominated by the Council of Trade Unions.

Current Board members

- Ian Elliott, Plumbing, Gasfitting, Drainlaying & Roofing ITO Chief Executive (Chair)
- Ruma Karaitiana, Building and Construction ITO Chief Executive (Deputy Chair)
- Murray Hobson, ETITO board
- Bruce Robertson, Hospitality Standards Institute board
- Richard Westlake, Careerforce board
- Barbara Wilkinson, PAMPITO Chief Executive
- Garry Fissenden, ETITO Chief Executive
- Kevin Bryant, AglITO Chief Executive
- Paul Tolich, NZCTU

Appendix 3 – Industry Training Organisations

This section provides a list of ITOs, arranged by sector and a broad overview of what they cover. Because these sectors can overlap, sometimes an ITO will be listed more than once.

Primary sector

- Agriculture ITO (including the water sector)
- Equine ITO (including horse breeding)
- Extractives ITO (quarrying, mining, gas, resource recovery)
- FITEC (including forestry)
- Horticulture ITO (including viticulture, fruit and vegetable production)
- Infratrains (including agricultural spraying)
- NZ ITO (including dairy and meat processing and livestock research)
- Seafood ITO (including fishing and aquaculture)

Manufacturing sector

- Apparel and Textile ITO (including clothing, footwear and carpet)
- NZ Marine ITO (including boat building)
- Competenz (including food & beverage manufacturing, engineering)
- ETITO (including electronic manufacturing)
- FITEC (including wood product and furniture manufacturing)
- Joinery ITO (including laminate fabrication, glass processing)
- MITO (including canvas fabrication)
- NZ ITO (including dairy and meat processing)
- PAMPITO (including plastics production, ink & resins, paint manufacturing)
- Print NZ (printing, packaging, graphic communication), now part of the Communications and Media ITO.
- Seafood ITO (including seafood processing)

Infrastructure (Construction, Transport, Communications) sector

- ATTTTO (including aviation, aeronautical engineering, airport operations and rental vehicle services)
- Building and Construction ITO (including carpentry, concrete, plastering, interior systems, bricklaying and masonry)
- Building Service Contractors ITO (including cleaning, rubbish removal)
- Communications and Media ITO (including both PrintNZ Training and the Journalist's Training Organisation and sign making)
- Competenz (including rail and maritime)
- Electricity Supply ITO (including power production, transmission and maintenance)
- ETITO (including telecommunications)
- FloorNZ (including sanding & finishing, installation, sale & support, and painting)
- DecorateNZ (painting and decorating)
- Infratrains (including roading construction)
- Joinery ITO (including kitchen and aluminum joinery, glazing)
- MITO (including automotive engineering, panel beating, painting, transport and logistics)
- Opportunity Training (including power crane, scaffolding)
- Plumbing, Gasfitting, Drainlaying & Roofing ITO
- Water Industry Training (part of Agriculture ITO, covering water supply & wastewater)

Services sector

- ATTTO (including tourism, travel agencies, museums/galleries and airline/airport services)
- Building Service Contractors ITO (including pest control, document destruction)
- ETITO (including call centres, security, financial services, real estate services)
- Equine ITO (including racing, equestrian coaching)
- Funeral Services Training Trust
- HITO (including hairdressing, barbering and beauty industries)
- Horticulture ITO (including nurseries, landscaping)
- Hospitality Standards Institute (including hotels, restaurant, cookery)
- Journalist's Training Organisation (journalism across all media), now part of the Communications and Media ITO.
- Retail Institute (includes retail and wholesale, merchandising, stock control)
- Retail Meat ITO (including butchery)
- Skills Active (including community recreation, snow sports, adventure, coaching, fitness)
- NZ Sports Turf ITO (including greenkeeping, golf course management)

Government and community services sector

- Careerforce (including health, disability and community support sectors, social services, youth work)
- ETITO (including ambulance services)
- EMQUAL Emergency Management Qualifications
- Learning State (public sector, including local government)
- Pharmacy ITO (including community or hospital pharmacy)

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