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IN OTHER NEWS

Letters to the editor



Vocational Education and Training (VET) Review

Dear Editor

Thanks for pointing us in the direction of information about the Review.

I also read what Skills had to say and I read the frequently asked questions on The Skills website – what a big bucket of sick.

The claims they make about being there for the industry and that the ITO is owned by the industry got me fuming.

When have they ever listened to us? The service they supply sucks and they don't communicate with us.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) REVIEW



Last week we told you of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Review.

The Federation has read a great deal of information about the Review and believe it is looking good for the country.

There are volumes of information on line about the Review so we are going to try and focus on the issues that affect us the most.

We have noticed a lot of information contained in the consultation documents has already been consulted on over the last twelve months, so essentially this is really a final consultation of the outcomes of the initial consultations.

The three main proposals are as follows:

Proposal 1: Redefined roles for industry bodies and education providers

In the Government's proposed vocational education system, industry, employers and education providers would each have clear and complementary roles to play in ensuring learners, employers and communities get what they need.

The Government would clarify roles and minimise overlapping responsibilities, so they are positioned to act collaboratively.

The Government wants to hear views on proposals to:

- extend the leadership role of industry and employers across all vocational education, including provider-based vocational education, through new "Industry Skills Bodies";
- transfer to vocational education providers the ITOs' current role of

They shouldn't be allowed to produce such propaganda to support their cause.

There is a lot of patch protection going on and they seem to be the masters of it

Keep up the fight as it looks like this could be a long one.

ED

We would tend to agree with your writer.

Some of what we have read seems to be about patch protection and not about what is best for our industry.

One of the bad things about all this is that it is industry money being used to protect the patches we have no say in.

They get to spend our money on protecting something we don't agree with.

Hard times

Dear Editor

I don't know about everyone else out there but times are hard for me and it's not because I don't have work, it's because of all the shit we put up with on a daily basis.

There is occupational safety and health requirements, the never ending risk of prosecution if I make a mistake, changes to the tax system and all the employment law changes

supporting workplace learning and assessment for work based vocational education; and

- provide industry with a purchase role across all vocational education, through advice to the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), which TEC must give regard to.

Proposal 2: Create a New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology with a robust regional network of provision

The Government proposes to create a New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology to offer high-quality vocational education throughout New Zealand, building on and expanding the regional presence of the current ITP network.

The proposal to create the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology would bring together all 16 existing ITPs in New Zealand.

The creation of a new institution that encompasses the delivery previously offered through our current 16 ITPs will allow greater and faster improvements, compared to continuing with ad-hoc mergers of competing ITPs across New Zealand, as individual institutions run into financial difficulties.

At the national level, the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology would have a leadership role for vocational education nationally and regionally, driving efficient and effective education delivery. It would be governed by a national Council appointed by the Minister of Education, overseeing a single combined management team and balance sheet to manage capital and operational budgets, staffing, and student and learning management systems.

Proposal 3: A unified vocational education funding system

The proposed changes above would need to be supported by a new funding system. Creating one funding system for vocational education would ensure learners get the skills, experience and support they need to be successful, providers have the funding they need to be sustainable and to support our regions, and Industry Skills Bodies can fulfil their roles.

The Government will work through the details of the new funding regime after consultation.

They want to hear your ideas about how it could work, and what kind of incentives different arrangements might create.

At this stage, the Government envisages that a new funding system would include:

such as the minimum wage.

I get sick of it all. I became a tradesman to work with my hands and when I started my small business I thought that would continue and I'd be able to hand on my skills to my employees but no, I've found myself spending most of the time meeting legislation and regulations.

Someone said to me that hard times make you stronger. Well if hard times make you stronger then I should be able to whip Superman's ass.

ED

Yes writer all the legislative requirements have a huge impact on the operation of a small business.

It's no wonder there is a skills shortage when a lot of skilled people are spending their time meeting legislative requirements.

Look at a construction sites around New Zealand, we wonder how much is spent solely to meet health and safety requirements that are over and above what is really required.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS?

We dug this out of an old Government report and thought it was very relevant. What do you think?

The Court also took both

- a consolidated set of funding rates for both on-job and off-job provision;
- funding for strategically important delivery that comes at higher costs (for example, where more delivery is in remote regions or in areas with lower populations). This could be a per-learner top up or through a base grant;
- funding for Industry Skills Bodies (since they would not receive funding for individual trainees and apprentices), balanced with employer contributions to ensure Industry Skills Bodies are responsive to employers;
- continued industry/employer contributions to the cost of training; and
- continued fees to learners in some cases.

As you can see there is a lot covered by the three proposals and the Federation sees a lot in the Review and proposals as being needed. The Federation's comments at this stage will concentrate on what we believe is needed by our industry.

The impact on our industry at this early stage is with regard to apprenticeships. Advanced training will be addressed later.

So what is the final product from the process? The Federation believes that at the end of an apprenticeship the industry needs an individual that is well trained, has the knowledge and skills in their chosen trade/s, a person who is able to take responsibility for their work and actions, and is able to contribute to protecting the health and safety of the public of New Zealand.

We draw your attention to a comment made in The Commission of Inquiry into Vocational Training 1965 (The Tyndall Commission) which we believe is still true today but has been forgotten.

Apart from what he learns by way of formal instruction, there are some things that he can acquire only by a process of "rubbing-off" from experienced men. Some things too, must become second nature by repetition, a process that takes time. To these aspects of strictly trade training there must be added the need for an apprentice.. to become an adult, physically and socially..This process of growing up can go on most effectively in the real world of the workplace.

Taking out the sexist nature of the wording the Federation believes if the principles of the comment were applied the industry would be far better off. Teach every apprentice the skills required in a formal environment so there is consistency in training and skills throughout

unions and employers to task for not adhering to the principle that realistic margins should be related to "genuine skill and responsibility": In some cases the parties have insisted on artificial classifications of skill and have thereby prevented true margins for skill being created.

Moreover, where improved methods of work have resulted in skilled operations being broken down into various less skilled operations suitable for semi-skilled or unskilled workers, there has been a tendency to insist that these less skilled workers be paid at skilled rates. The effect has been to downgrade the truly skilled worker and depress his [sic] margin.

Is this the affect the minimum wage is having? Sure we need to look after the unskilled but would it not be better to get them skilled so the employer gets value for money?

Send us your thoughts

Lighten Up



Thanks to the submitter who made our day.

Three surgeons are discussing who makes the

the country. Let them be practiced in the skill and have their knowledge enhanced on site with experienced tradespeople.

At the moment apprentices attend the Polytechnic for mostly assessments and in reality they are trained to pass assessments, not to do the job. With the advent of the ITO scheme training has moved away from the polytechnics and has landed squarely at the feet of the employer. This seems, in construction, to have followed in the footsteps of builders.

The Federation believes there is no comparison between builders and plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers and that our trades should be trained and assessed at the polytechnics.

The reason for returning the training to the polytechnic is to allow for consistency and plug the gaps in training as not all plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying businesses do all things covered by our industry.

The proposal by Government also includes the Open Polytechnic becoming part of the newly formed New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology. They will use their experience to continue with the provision of distance learning. Yet again this will allow for consistency in what the apprentices and other trainees get taught.

New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology will also take over the administration of apprenticeships.

One key issue the Federation will be commenting on is **accountability**. It seems at the moment that when the likes of The Skills Organisation (ITO) and the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board get money from practitioners for fees etc that money ceases to be industry money and all of a sudden becomes theirs to do with as they see fit.

There is no accountability to the industry for the way its money is spent, so practitioners dish out money and other organisations spend it at will, this includes some membership organisations.

Part of the proposal would see the ITO's disestablished and some of their current functions would be moved to the Polytechnics and the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology.

There is scope for them to use their skills to become one of the Industry Skills Bodies. As they (Skills) have lost our trust, the Federation is unsure if it would support them becoming one of the Industry Skills Bodies. Perhaps if accountability measures were put in place we would look at it.

Looking into the future after the Review we would also like to see

best patients to operate on. The first surgeon said “Electricians are the best, everything inside is colour coded.”

The second surgeon says, “No, I think librarians are, everything inside them is in alphabetical order.”

The third surgeon shut them up when he said “You’re all wrong. Politicians are the easiest to operate on. There’s no guts, no heart, no brains, and no spine. Plus, the head and the butt are interchangeable...”

scope for the polytechnic to provide other industry training such as backflow, supervision, fire and sprinkler systems, and any other advanced training required by the industry.

Also, and most importantly, there would be the Certifiers training which is **not part of an apprenticeship and because of the two registration qualifications will need to be paid for as an extra (cost unknown).**

More to follow in the next few weeks.

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