

New national VET industry advisory arrangements



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The industry training advisory arrangements at the national level for the vocational education and training sector are currently undergoing significant changes that will have an impact on continuing as well as entry-level education and training. The changes will also position the library and information services sector in a wider skills forum than as at present where it is included in the cultural industries coverage of CREATE Australia.

Early this year the Australian National Training Authority began a process of restructuring national industry training arrangements. Though undoubtedly driven by decreases in federal and state governments funding last year and foreshadowed, the proposed restructure does aim to strengthen industry's leadership of the national VET system in that 'the new arrangements will be required to have the strength and capacity to fully engage at enterprise and industry level.'

The central part of the process underway is that the current twenty-nine industry training advisory bodies (ITABs) must reshape into a maximum of eight Industry Skills Councils in the first instance. Understandably there has been frantic negotiating activity between ITABs.

The proposed new industry skills councils will have two major and complementary roles:

- actively supporting the development, implementation and continuous improvement of high quality, nationally recognised training products and services; and
- assisting industries, enterprises and their workforce to integrate skill development with business goals and support accurate industry intelligence on future directions.

The model that the CREATE board is pursuing is an Industry Skills Council formed through a merger with the Finance and IT and T industry bodies. It would aim for a lateral emphasis for its advisory councils rather than a collective of industry silos. Possible areas of coverage by the council under consideration include:

- twenty first century — future research (information, knowledge, creative, experience economies)
- sustainability and innovation
- employment values

and from CREATE's perspective integrating design, media entertainment and arts, and cultural heritage into these.

The co-location of library and information services with Finance and IT and T offers new opportunities for the alignment of competencies and training packages across our industries as there are skills common to all. It is arguably preferable to library and information services being located in an industry skills council with tourism, retail, sport and entertainment as ANTA had initially proposed in its ITAB discussion paper. Some in our sector will remember a previous ANTA restructure that saw the windup of the ARTS

Training Australia and Sport and Recreation ITABs at the national level to form CREATE and the subsequent separation from CREATE of Sport and Recreation.

The due date to ANTA for proposals for industry skills councils is 31 March. ANTA intends that agreements for councils can commence from 1 July 2003. No ITAB will be funded under the current arrangements beyond 30 June 2004.

Sitting between the ANTA Board and the industry skills councils will be the proposed new National Industry Skills Forum. The forum would meet in September and March of each year to provide high-level advice to the Board on the accuracy and credibility of strategic planning documentation and information. It would not be concerned with the allocation of funding. The forum would comprise:

- one representative from each of ACCI, AiG, BCA, NFF and ACTU;
- the chairs (not delegates) of the bodies comprising the new national industry advisory arrangements;
- the chairs of the state/territory training boards; and
- the ANTA board.

Once the new national infrastructure is in place no doubt adjustments in the coverage of the state and territory ITABs will be made to fit in with it.

VET — *Shaping our future: 2004–2010*

ANTA has also recently undertaken extensive consultation on future directions for VET through its National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training for 2004 to 2010 project. It proposes that the new approach to national industry advisory arrangements will complement the development of the new strategy. A number of ALIA members attended the forums held by ANTA around Australia and provided feedback.

The *Shaping our future* discussion paper identified six strategy areas: building skills for Australian industry; supporting communities; enabling individuals to learn throughout life; renewing and sharing Indigenous learning culture; guaranteeing quality products and services; and investing in Australia's skills. Some of the consistent messages were:

- Critical need for the inclusion of enabling ('soft') skills
- Develop a learning culture in Australian businesses
- Flexibility and adaptability in the packaging of qualifications are needed to ensure 'just in time, just enough, just for me' learning and to acknowledge changing work patterns
- Industry's voice and support is essential
- Greater support for community based VET is needed
- Allow people to learn, unlearn, relearn
- Change the perceptions of the value of VET to improve its standing in relation to the other education sectors
- Utilise Indigenous learning culture better by shifting the focus on the individual to support of the ▶

Feedback to your Board of Directors

Do you have an idea, compliment or concern about your Association? Contact any director below on personal issues and ideas will be reviewed at each meeting of the Board.

E-mail to feedback@alia.org.au will be automatically forwarded to all Board members.

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family and community to better enable individuals to learn

- Introduce more consistency, flexibility and streamline the recognition of qualifications
- Redress the balance between too much emphasis on monitoring the administration of the system and not enough on the

delivery.

Phase 2 of the review of the Library and Information services training package

If you are interested in participating in the consultation on this CREATE project please contact Marie Murphy at National Office, marie.murphy@alia.org.au. ■

Board of Directors meeting

14 March 2003

The Board undertook a futures planning session projecting to ALIA 2010 possibilities. Papers will be developed around four key themes for discussion and further development by the National Policy Congress:

1. Continuing professional development, lifelong learning, future proofing — skills for the future
2. Shared vision/drive > empowerment
3. Celebrating success, promoting innovation
4. Communication — managing expectations — what we do, we do well.

2003 and 2004 plan

ALIA — making the difference

The Board endorsed the plan, noting that many of the initiatives are underway. Five initiatives were identified as of priority:

- B — Membership growth program;
- C — A framework for career-long education for the knowledge age, encompassing formal education and continuing professional development;
- H — develop and promote lobbying and advocacy resources for members;
- K — implement new services and a marketing campaign aimed at new professional members to strengthen participation in ALIA by those early in their LIS career;
- R — review ALIA's assets.

ALIA House

An expression of interest in purchasing ALIA House was considered. As ALIA House is a major asset for the Association the Board has had a watching brief on the market and the benefits to the Association of retaining or selling ALIA House. Following investigation of all options the Board affirmed its position that it is not in the Association's best interests to sell ALIA House at this time.

Strategic partnerships

The Board resolved to finalise strategic partnerships with Aurora; a coalition of the Australian Society of Archivists, Museums Australia, the Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Materials; the Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL); the Records Management Association of Australia; the Regional Cultural Alliance; and to work with Public Libraries Australia on the development of a memorandum of understanding.

New generation

The Board commends the work done by the New Generation Policy and Advisory Group (NGPAG) in developing proposals for marketing new services for students/new members of the profession. A national New Graduates group was endorsed. The Board has asked NGPAG to work with it to further develop proposals for mentoring, recruitment and CPD activities.

Course recognition

The Graduate Diploma in Information Management — Information Services/Schools streams offered by RMIT; and the Master of Information Management (Librarianship), the Graduate Diploma in Information and Library Studies and the Bachelor of Arts (Librarianship and Corporate Information Management) offered by Curtin University were recognised for seven years from 1 January 2002.

Policy statements

The *Library and information services sector: core knowledge, skills and attributes* statement and the *ALIA/ASLA statement on teacher librarians in Australian schools* were endorsed. Editorial changes to the *Statement on information literacy for all Australians* and to the format for joint statements were endorsed.

Membership fees

A five per cent increase for the coming membership year was endorsed. In reaching its decision the Board took into account the fact that since 2000 the Association has not passed on to members through the membership fee the costs associated with the introduction of the GST and eliminated the fee for group membership.

Other business

Joyce Kirk was appointed as the Association's representative on the National Library of Australia Harold White Fellowship Scheme advisory committee. The Board thanked Kerry Smith for her excellent contribution as the Association's representative for the previous two terms.

An update on the LISEKA project is reported separately in this issue [see p30].

The Awards and Voucher system by-laws were amended.

The TropicALIA (Queensland) group was dissolved and will continue as an e-list. ■

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