Communique

The Aquaculture and Wild Catch Industry Reference Committee (IRC) held a meeting on 1 March via teleconference to discuss and prepare a response to the Department of Education and Training about the recommendations made in two reviews that relate to Vocational Education and Training.

These reviews were:

Training Product Reform – a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Industry and Skills Council initiative that suggests changes to Australia's qualifications, skills sets and units of competency design to keep up with changes in how the VET training system works.

IRC members discussed proposals for enhancements to the design of training products as part of the COAG Training Product Reform. Utilising the briefing papers prepared by Skills Impact, the IRC considered the key changes proposed to the training package to be:

- Construction of qualifications with units of competency across three categories
- A broader definition of competency to encompass specific knowledge and skills requirements
- Establish 'banks' of units of competency to expedite training product development and reduce duplication
- Stronger links between skills sets and qualifications.

Unduly Short Courses – a strategic review by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) that considered how courses delivered in less time than recommended can erode confidence in the system and pose risks to all.

IRC members considered the strategic review of unduly short course training in the Australian VET sector. Utilising the briefing papers prepared by Skills Impact, the IRC discussed the three key recommendations:

- Recommendation 1: That the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* be amended to include a definition of the 'amount of training' that focuses on supervised learning and assessment activities.
- Recommendation 2: That training package developers be able to respond to industry-specific risks by setting mandatory requirements, including an amount of training.
- Recommendation 3: That RTOs be required to publish Product Disclosure Statements that include the range of learning activities expected, including the amount of training, for each training product on their scope for registration.

Sign-off for IRC Response to Departmental Proposals

The IRC submitted responses to both the "Training Product Reform: what is the case for change?" and "Addressing issues relating to unduly short courses".