

STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Context

The Australian Government has established 10 Jobs and Skills Councils to ensure that the national Vocational Education and Training (VET) system delivers better outcomes for learners and employers.

Jobs and Skills Councils are tripartite and bring together employers, unions and governments in recognition that no single party can deliver the necessary solutions to skills and workforce challenges facing the nation – these challenges must be tackled through collaboration.

Industry Skills Australia (ISA) is the Jobs and Skills Council for the nation's Transport and Logistics, Rail, Aviation and Maritime industries and the emerging sectors of Omnichannel Logistics and Distribution, and Air and Space Transport and Logistics.

Jobs and Skills Councils have **four (4) broad roles**:

1. **Industry Stewardship** which involves gathering industry intelligence to reliably represent the views and needs of industry back to the VET system and its decision-makers;
2. **Workforce Planning** which enables industry to identify its workforce development and skills issues and design high-impact solutions which are captured in the national Workforce Plan for the industry;
3. **Training Product Development** which focusses on improving the quality, speed to market and responsiveness of training products to employer and workforce needs;
4. **Implementation, promotion and monitoring** which involves supporting training providers, promoting careers and monitoring how well the system is meeting the needs of industry and learners.

Jobs and Skills Councils operate in a tripartite environment.

2. Purpose

Strategic Workforce Planning Committees have been established by ISA as the central mechanism through which industry is empowered to identify its immediate and emerging skill needs and the responses that are needed by the national skills system, industry and governments.

Comprising senior industry leaders, these Committees work on behalf of industry to shape and oversee development of the National Workforce Plan based on intelligence and consultation with key stakeholders from across Australia.

Each Committee works in collaboration with, and will consider advice from, other elements of the Jobs and Skills Council model including:

- Supply Chain Leaders' Summit and State/Territory based Industry Roundtables
- Industry Advisory Council
- Technology Futures Taskforce
- Training Product and Implementation Working Groups

Each Committee will be professionally supported by the following ISA teams:

- Executive Leadership Team
- Committee Secretariat
- Industry Engagement Team
- Research and Analytics Team
- Communications and Events Team

3. Functions

The Committee is responsible for:

1. Shaping and overseeing development of a detailed national **Workforce Plan** for the industry that is reviewed annually to respond to emerging priorities. It involves:
 - Identifying skill needs (current, new and emerging) as a result of factors such as technology change, automation, changed work practices, new and existing regulation and evolving consumer demands;
 - Drawing on:
 - o cross-industry intelligence from the Industry Advisory Council
 - o cutting-edge analysis of the Technology Futures Taskforce
 - o grassroots feedback from the Training Product and Implementation Working Groups
 - o labour market analysis and other evidence developed by Jobs and Skills Australia
 - o Industry-specific research, analysis and data analytics by ISA
 - Identifying and prioritising the responses needed from industry, governments and the training system to address the identified workforce development needs of industry (including, but not limited to, policy-based responses).
2. Directing a **program of work** to be undertaken by ISA which may include:
 - Collaborating with other Strategic Workforce Planning Committees or Jobs and Skills Councils on joint priorities;
 - Promoting the Workforce Plan and agreed priorities to key stakeholders;
 - Continually gathering industry intelligence on workforce development and skills needs to inform and update the Workforce Plan as required.

From time to time, the Committee may also be involved in projects commissioned by the Commonwealth or other agencies where such projects align with the functions of the Committee.

The Committee may also choose to provide advice to the Commonwealth on critical workforce planning issues, VET system policy or quality issues as deemed appropriate and as relevant to its roles.

The Terms of Reference are in accordance with the [Jobs and Skills Council Code of Conduct](#), and the [Jobs and Skills Council Program Guidelines](#).

Authority & Scope

The Committee is advisory in nature. It does not have authority to commit Industry Skills Australia (ISA), or other stakeholders to funding, contractual arrangements, or public policy positions. Recommendations of the Committee are subject to endorsement through ISA's governance and decision-making processes.

4. Outputs

The Committee will oversee and provide input to the development of:

- i. A detailed national **Workforce Plan** for the industry which is reviewed each year to respond to emerging priorities. The Plan will be developed in accordance with the requirements of the Commonwealth;
- ii. The Committee may also oversee periodic reviews of the Workforce Plan to assess effectiveness, relevance, and alignment with industry needs.
- iii. Formal **advice** to ISA in response to draft policy, discussion papers, VET system reviews and other matters where the topic is within scope of the Jobs and Skills Council's roles.
- iv. Commentary on other work such as third party papers and the work of the Jobs and Skills Council Network on ISA industry sectors and provide responses where the Committee deems appropriate.

Actions and outputs will be captured in the minutes of the meetings. Other records could include Letters of Support, or endorsed papers.

5. Governance and Membership

Committee Membership

The Committee may comprise up to 15 Members (including the Chair). Its total Membership must be broadly representative of the sectors covered by the Committee. Additional members may be considered under exceptional circumstances with agreement from the Committee.

Committee Members must be recognised as senior industry leaders, hold senior positions in their organisation and be drawn from across:

- Large, medium and small business
- Industry organisations
- Unions.

Membership composition will be reviewed periodically to ensure continues alignment with industry coverage, emerging skill priorities, and workforce challenges.

Committee Members are identified and appointed to ensure a balanced representation of senior level expertise and experience, aligning with the strategic needs of the Committee and identified gaps in representation. Membership of the Committee will also seek to recognise and advance gender balance, diversity, equity, and inclusion through their composition.

Relevant persons may be invited to attend meetings to provide presentations, expert technical information, or for other purposes, as agreed by the Committee (see Observer Status).

Consideration of new Members

When considering a new person for appointment to the Committee, regard should be given to the person's capability, skills and/or experience in the following areas:

- Strategic Workforce Planning and Development

- Industry Influence and Leadership
- Industry/Sector Knowledge
- New & Emerging Technologies
- Licensing and Regulation

Terms

Committee Members are appointed for a term of up to four (4) years and may serve a maximum of three (3) terms.

Half-terms of two (2) years may also be used to stagger membership and ensure that renewal is balanced with the need for continuity.

Chair and Deputy Chair

Terms for the Chair and Deputy Chair are two (2) years. Terms may be extended subject to bipartite agreement of Committee Members.

The approach is that the Chair and Deputy Chair positions reflect the bipartite construct of the Committee with one role held by an employer or employer organisation and the other role held by a representative of a union.

Where two or more candidates seek to be elected to the Chair or Deputy Chair position, a vote will be held with a simple majority determining the vote. In the case of a tie, the Chair shall hold the deciding vote for the Deputy position, and the Deputy shall hold the deciding vote for the Chair.

ISA will manage the nomination and voting process where required.

Ex-officio

ISA will be an ex-officio Member of the Committee and contribute to discussion and debate. ISA may not vote on matters nor stand as Chair or Deputy Chair.

Responsibilities of the Chair

The Chair will be responsible for the overall functioning of the Committee and adherence to the Terms of Reference. This includes:

- Conducting effective meetings;
- Facilitating open and honest discussions amongst Committee Members and ensuring all Committee Members are provided equal opportunity to contribute;
- Ensuring that the provisions for managing conflict of interest are adhered to at all times;
- Facilitating consensus among Committee Members where formal decisions are required;
- Ensuring Committee Members conduct themselves in a respectful and collegiate manner.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will assume the role of chair.

In the event of both the Chair and Deputy Chair being unavailable to preside over a scheduled meeting, the Committee Members will elect one of their number to serve as Chair for the purposes of that meeting only.

Attendance and Absences

If a Committee Member is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings, it will be considered that the Member is no longer able to commit adequate time to the role and ISA may seek to appoint a new Committee Member.

When a Committee Member is unable to attend, they may provide their views and position on an agenda item to the Chair in advance of the meeting. Voting by proxy is otherwise not permitted unless expressly approved by the Chair.

In exceptional circumstances, and subject to the express approval of the Chair, a Committee Member may seek approval to send a suitable alternate. Such approval must be sought a minimum of 48 hours prior to the meeting. Voting by the alternate is not permitted unless expressly approved by the Chair.

Responsibilities of the Committee Members

Committee Members are required to:

- Operate in accordance with the ethical obligations and expected standards outlined in the [JSC Code of Conduct](#) and Terms of Reference;
- Attend all scheduled meetings;
- Declare and manage any real or perceived conflict of interest in a timely and transparent manner;
- Participate constructively and respectfully with other Committee Members and ISA employees in meetings;
- Read all relevant agenda papers and draft materials in preparation for meetings;
- Provide expert and timely advice during and in-between meetings;
- Respond to requests for advice according to agreed timelines;
- Be an advocate for the work of the Committee across industry;
- As appropriate, introduce a network of industry connections to the work of the Jobs and Skills Council.

Responsibilities of Industry Skills Australia

ISA will provide professional expertise and secretariat services to the Committee, which includes:

- Provision of project management, stakeholder engagement and technical expertise to deliver on the Committee's program of work;
- Provision of contemporary policy advice and cutting-edge analysis, research and data analytics;
- Targeted and timely notification of any key issues or critical information relevant to the work of the Committee;
- Development of meeting agendas, meeting papers and meeting minutes in consultation with the Chair and Committee Members;

- Arrangement of all appropriate meeting venues and catering.

6. Meetings

All meetings will be chaired by the nominated Chair or in their absence, the Deputy Chair.

Meetings will be held face-to-face and virtually when required. The Committee will meet up to three (3) times each year to coincide with key decision-making points in the Workforce Plan development cycle.

Meeting agendas and supporting papers will be circulated by the ISA Secretariat a minimum of five (5) working days prior to the meeting.

Draft minutes will be circulated for comment within 10 working days.

Quorum

A meeting quorum will be half of the Members of the Committee plus one.

Decision-making

Decisions will be made by consensus. This means that all Committee Members are satisfied with a decision even though it may not be their first choice.

Out of Session process

The Out of Session (OOS) process may be used when items may need to be progressed, be time sensitive and fall out of Committee Meeting dates. Items may be For Information, For Noting, For Voting or For Support. OOS items will be formally noted at the next available scheduled meeting.

Where urgent decisions are required between meetings the Chair and Deputy Chair may be consulted to provide interim guidance, subject to subsequent noting by the Committee.

Dispute Resolution

If the Chair deems that consensus is not possible, and that it will prevent the Committee from effectively undertaking its functions and/or producing the required deliverables, the Chair may choose to refer the matter to the Dispute Resolution Committee of the ISA Board.

Decisions of the ISA Board's Dispute Resolution Committee are final.

7. Observer Status

Observers may be invited to a committee meeting to foster collaboration or knowledge sharing on critical issues. Observers do not have voting rights nor decision-making authority and must adhere to the rules of conduct set out in the Terms of Reference.

Observer status is for the specific meeting/s specified in the invitation. The Committee may extend or revoke observer status based on Members' feedback on the value of the observer participation.

A Department of Employment and Workplace Relations representative(s) may attend a committee meeting at any time.

Observers are required to comply with the confidentiality and conflict of interest provisions of these Terms of Reference.

ISA Committees

A Member of another ISA Strategic Workforce Planning Committee may be invited to participate in a meeting of the Committee in observer capacity. On approval of the Chair, ISA will extend a formal invitation to the Committee Member stating the purpose, meeting protocols and details.

Key Stakeholder

Committees may also invite a key stakeholder to a meeting in observer capacity where the key stakeholder is critical to collaboration or knowledge sharing. On approval of the Chair, ISA will extend a formal invitation to the stakeholder stating the purpose, meeting protocols and details.

Unsolicited Requests

If a request is received from a key stakeholder seeking to attend a meeting of the Committee, the request will be formally processed through the ISA Secretariat for consideration by the Chair. On approval of the Chair, ISA will extend a formal invitation to the stakeholder stating the purpose, meeting protocols and details.

8. Conflict of Interest

All Committee Members must be aware of the potential for conflict of interest to exist or arise. All Members are required to:

1. Declare any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest that exist on commencing their Membership with the Committee; and
2. Declare any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest that arise or are likely to arise during their Membership of the Committee; and
3. Take all reasonable steps to avoid being placed in a situation where there is a potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest possible.

Committee Members must notify the Chair and the ISA Committee Secretariat as soon as practicable after a material personal interest arises. If a Committee Member is uncertain whether a conflict is a material personal interest, the Committee Member should notify the Chair and the ISA Committee Secretariat.

Whether the conflict is a material personal interest should be determined by a majority of non-conflicted Members and the reason for the decision will be recorded in the Committee meeting minutes.

Members should declare if they have received any form of gifts, benefits or hospitality that could, or could be seen to, or perceived to compromise their role as a Member of the Committee.

All conflicts of interest will also be recorded in the Conflict of Interest Register and will be available to the Committee.

Upon appointment, a Committee Member must complete a material personal interest declaration at **Attachment A**.

9. Confidentiality

All Committee Members are required to maintain strict confidentiality regarding any time-sensitive, commercial-in-confidence or restricted information discussed or shared during Committee activities and meetings.

Committee Members must also ensure that information, data, and draft materials accessed through digital platforms or analytics tools are used solely for Committee purposes and handled in accordance with ISA information security requirements.

10. Travel

Committee Members are encouraged to consider travel and accommodation as an in-kind industry contribution to the work of the Committee.

Where this is not possible, ISA may support reasonable travel and accommodation costs, or part thereof, for Members up to a maximum of \$10,000 per Committee per calendar year. The process and procedure for travel requests are set out in the Committee Member Travel Policy at **Attachment B**.

Cost effective, convenient locations for meetings will be selected to reduce the travel and time impact on Committee Members.

11. Critical Industry Stakeholders

Critical Industry Stakeholders are those organisations whose support for the Workforce Plan is considered critical to its broad acceptance by industry and governments.

Critical Industry Stakeholders are provided a minimum of three (3) opportunities to engage in the development and implementation of the Workforce Plan. These are:

1. During the initial consultative process to identify key issues;
2. As part of the validation process to confirm the key issues, proposed strategies and priorities;
3. As part of activities nominated in the Workforce Plan which are subsequently funded by the Commonwealth and contracted to ISA.
4. Engagement processes will seek, where appropriate, to include diverse perspectives, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to support inclusive and representative workforce planning.