Australian Government
Australian Skills Quality Authority

MEDIA RELEASE

Collaboration required to address security training issues

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A holistic approach and collaboration by key industry stakeholders is needed to address longstanding and persistent issues in training for the security industry, a new report by the national training regulator has found.

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) today published the findings of its national strategic review of training for the security industry.

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ASQA Chief Commissioner Chris Robinson said inconsistent licensing arrangements across states and territories and poor quality training and assessment were posing fundamental challenges to ensuring licensed security personnel were equipped to safely carry out their duties.

"A key driver of ASQA's review was concerns raised in successive reports by Coroners investigating the deaths of patrons during or as a result of restraint or intervention by security personnel in the course of incident control, particularly around licensed premises," Mr Robinson said.

"ASQA's national strategic review has confirmed many of the issues raised by Coroners, and by other stakeholders in the vocational education and training (VET) sector."

Mr Robinson said that while qualifications for security roles were national, the regulation of security licensing in state and territory-based, making it more difficult to ensure consistency and alignment between qualifications and licensing requirements.

"Until the inconsistent licensing arrangements are fixed, people will continue to cross borders to attain licences in jurisdictions with fewer requirements," he said.

"The other key finding of our review is the threat posed to quality training by the prevalence of extremely short courses which do not allow people to gain the required skills and competencies.

"While this issue is systemic across VET, it is endemic in security training."

Mr Robinson said ASQA recommended that state and territory licensing authorities agree to a single set of qualifications and units to be used in all jurisdictions, which would pave the way for consistent licensing arrangements that could be incorporated into the training package.

"ASQA has also recommended changes to the training package to more clearly specify assessment and volume of learning requirements; what can be delivered and assessed online and what cannot; the language, literacy and numeracy skill requirements of job roles; and skills in safe restraint techniques," he said.
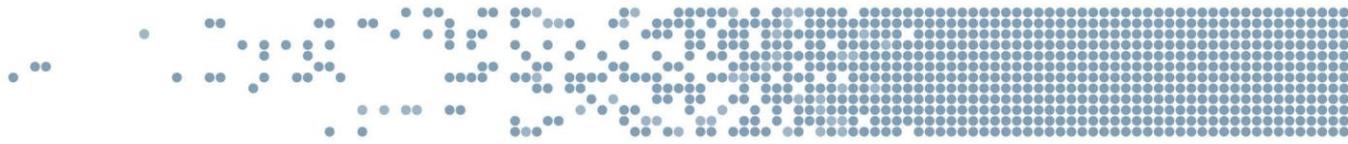
"The report also recommends a more strategic and systematic engagement between ASQA and licensing authorities to facilitate sharing of information and to achieve a coordinated and rapid response to licensing authority concerns about the quality and integrity of training and assessment."

ASQA's strategic review was overseen by a management committee chaired by ASQA's Chief Commissioner, which included representatives from the Australian Security Industry Association Limited; the Construction and Property Services Industry Skills Council; the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority; Training Accreditation Council Western Australia; the Queensland Office of Fair Trading; the NSW Police Force, Security Licensing and Enforcement Directorate; the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training; and United Voice.

Of the 67 RTOs audited for the review, 80.6 per cent of them being found to be not compliant with at least one of the national training standards that RTOs are required to meet at all times if they are offering training programs leading to Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) qualifications.

The areas of non-compliance ranged from relatively minor issues that could be and were rectified quickly, to very serious short comings, with the highest rates of non-compliance in relation to the standard relating to training delivery and assessment, which is core business for an RTO. The RTOs that were found not to be compliant with the required standards at the initial audit were given 20 working days to respond to the non-compliances found.

The result of the rectification process was that 57 RTOs (85.1 per cent) were able to demonstrate full compliance with all of the training standards required for registration, but that 10 RTOs (14.9 per cent) remained not compliant with one or more of the required standards following the rectification period.

ASQA continued regulatory action against the 10 RTOs that were unable to demonstrate compliance after the 20 working day rectification period. A further six RTOs were able to demonstrate compliance and three have not achieved compliance and are no longer registered. One has sought a review ASQA's decision to cancel its registration at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal which is yet to be finalised.