



A Commonwealth Government Initiative

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This Statement of Agreement and accompanying Industry Skills Action Plan documents at a broad level the agreed actions for Industry and Government emerging from the Industry Skills Initiative. The attached Industry Skills Action Plan outlines in more detail the initiatives which industry and government have agreed to undertake to address identified barriers to skills development. All parties recognise that there may be further activity and actions which will emerge as this plan evolves and as elements are progressively implemented.

The National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) on behalf of the *Electrotechnology Working Group* will establish an Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce to take forward issues identified in the attached action plan in four key areas:

- ❖ **Increased marketing and promotion**
- ❖ **More flexible and Alternative Training Pathways**
- ❖ **Evaluation of regulatory, legislative or systemic barriers to New Apprenticeships**
- ❖ **A streamlined response to demand for new skills**

The Taskforce agrees to report publicly on the impact of achievements to date against these four action areas at the next National Industry Skills Forum (currently scheduled for February 2001). The Taskforce will work in conjunction with the National Steering Committee on Cross-Industry issues on key actions and will provide additional reports at six monthly intervals on achievements against the plan directly to the Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs until June 2002.

The *Commonwealth* undertakes to assist with implementation of action as outlined in the action plan through direct participation in the Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce and on specific initiatives.

This Statement of Agreement recognises that a Cross-Industry Action Plan will be developed to address industry-wide issues and that this Cross-Industry Action Plan will complement and support the individual Action Plans.

Mr Simon Gerard
Chair
Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce

The Hon Dr David Kemp
Minister for Education,
Training, and Youth Affairs



NATIONAL
INDUSTRY
SKILLS INITIATIVE

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**ELECTROTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY
INDUSTRY SKILLS ACTION PLAN**

ELECTROTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE 1: ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL TASKFORCE OF INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES TO TAKE FORWARD KEY ACTIONS IN THE ACTION PLAN

Outcome	Strategy	Duration / timeline	Lead agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
<p>The Taskforce set up and the first meeting occurred with agreement on roles and endorsement of exposure draft</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA) to establish an Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce. 2. Establish a Chair of the Taskforce and agree on the roles of the Taskforce. 3. Endorse the exposure draft and set a sign-off date with the Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs. 4. Establish a project plan recognising industry ownership. 5. Agree to a two-way relationship between the Taskforce and the National Cross-Industry Steering Committee. 	<p>First Meeting of the Taskforce to take place by end of July 2000</p>	<p>Primary responsibility for the achievement of this outcome lies with NECA to establish the Taskforce.</p>	<p>First meeting of the Taskforce taken place.</p>

OBJECTIVE 2¾ INCREASED MARKETING AND PROMOTION

OBJECTIVE 2.1

Develop a promotional and marketing campaign aimed at increasing the number of people seeking to commence entry-level training in the electrotechnology trades.

Outcome	Strategy	Duration / timeline	Lead agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
Research conducted and campaign developed to address identified attitudinal barriers to entry into New Apprenticeships in electrotechnology	1. Conduct research into possible attitudinal barriers to entry into New Apprenticeships in electrotechnology, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ negative community attitude to an apprenticeship career ❖ poor attitude to / awareness of a career in electrotechnology ❖ lack of knowledge of electrotechnology training pathways, articulation and New Apprenticeship mechanisms ❖ possible enhancement to industry / Government / training organisation role in facilitating and promoting entry into the industry. 	4-6 months	Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce working with Government as required / appropriate	Survey and research results indicate areas and priorities for promotional and marketing campaign.
Communication/ promotional strategy/Campaigns developed and implemented and information sessions and workshops conducted to overcome identified attitudinal barriers	1. Develop and conduct promotional campaigns, information sessions and workshops with a range of community and school representatives, young people, parents and peers, older people seeking a career change and employers to ensure that stakeholders have the knowledge and awareness to advocate the benefits of training for a career in electrotechnology. 2. Implement a communication strategy to ensure that industry / government / training organisation stakeholders understand the importance of improving the skill levels in the industry and their role in promoting and facilitating entry into training for a career in electrotechnology.	12 months 12 months and then ongoing	Taskforce to set performance measures and work with Government specialists	Follow up survey indicates increased knowledge and awareness. Evidence of co-ordinated action by stakeholders to facilitate entry into training in the industry and use of flexible training pathways.

Outcome	Strategy	Duration / timeline	Lead agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
<p>Students and young people better able to make informed choices about education, training and employment options in the electrotechnology industry</p>	<p>Develop and implement a national career information strategy and products for students and young people to enable them to make more informed choices about education, training and employment options in the electrotechnology industry. These products will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ print products ❖ a careers website ❖ information kits ❖ workshops ❖ industry awards (eg electrical apprentice of the year). 	<p>Has commenced – duration 12 months initially</p>	<p>NECA and the Commonwealth including through the Careers Information Industry Partnership Programme as outlined in the contract, and through industry links and associations</p>	<p>Measurable increase in the volume and quality of career information about the electrotechnology industry.</p> <p>Number of “hits” on the website.</p> <p>Extent of the increase in knowledge about entry level opportunities in the electrotechnology industry for young people, by young people, career educators and other key intermediaries including parents.</p> <p>The extent to which the electrotechnology industry has adopted and implemented its own career information strategies.</p>
<p>Increased use of all available training pathways and support mechanisms to meet existing and future needs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use findings of research into barriers to entry into New Apprenticeships to identify possible areas for change in existing training pathways and support mechanisms. 2. Co-ordinate with industry/training representatives to ensure that changes introduced to training pathways and support mechanisms are informed by research findings. 	<p>To commence as soon as possible. Refer Objective 1.1.</p> <p>Review on an annual basis</p>	<p>Taskforce in conjunction with employers, unions, NUEITAB, ANTA, regulators and State/Territory Training Authorities</p>	<p>Adjustments made to training pathways and support mechanisms recognise attitudinal and systemic barriers.</p>

Outcome	Strategy	Duration/Timeline	Lead Agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
Support services map published and distributed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and develop a map of existing support services specifically for employers wishing to invest in training. 2. Publish and supply the map to interested employers. 3. Survey / interview employers currently and potentially providing structured training opportunities to identify further needs to support their management of New Apprenticeships. 4. Initiate strategies to meet these needs. 	<p>4 months</p> <p>6 months</p> <p>6-12 months</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Taskforce in consultation with Employer and industry associations	<p>Employers report more effective use of infrastructures and greater enterprise interest in New Apprenticeships.</p> <p>Training arrangements developed and in place.</p>
Strategies developed in response to identified value that Group Training Companies add to skills requirements of the industry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine Group Training Company (GTC) interface with employer stakeholders to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ effectiveness of brokerage role and ❖ potential perception that government initiatives dominate industry ownership. 2. Identify strategies in response to findings, as appropriate. 3. Recommend industry / Government response to implement identified strategies. 	<p>12 months</p> <p>18 months</p>	<p>Taskforce to define key responsibilities</p> <p>ANTA is undertaking a review of GTC Joint Policy Funding</p> <p>DETYA completed in March 2000 a review of Group Training Expansion Programme – report is being finalised</p>	<p>Report on GTCs evaluates current effectiveness of brokerage role and identifies strategies to ensure improved sense of industry control as appropriate.</p> <p>Response strategies implemented.</p>

Outcome	Strategy	Duration/Timeline	Lead Agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
Uptake of alternative training pathways	<p>1. Develop alternative pathways incorporating as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ cross-industry pathways (more entry points) ❖ specific competency outcomes rather than complete or licensed qualification ❖ more flexible entry points to training arising from, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expanded RPL arrangements for recognition of relevant technical skills from cross-industry experience - expanded RPL for entry-level skills to improve retention rates, eg key competencies demonstrating aptitude, interpersonal skills. 	Ongoing	Taskforce to set up a Reference Group of employers, GTCs, industry and training stakeholders, NUEITAB, Government, ANTA, technical and industry regulators, NCVET and National Cross-Industry Steering Committee	Alternative training pathways addressing identified issues developed.
Pilot of alternative, flexible training pathways conducted	<p>1. Pilot an alternative pathway developed to address identified issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ select target trainees and promote benefits of new training pathway ❖ identify success indicators / goals (eg higher percentage of target entrants, lower attrition, relevance of qualification outcomes) ❖ monitor outcomes (attrition rate, market demand / recognition, career pathways) ❖ evaluate new pathway in terms of identified issues (employer / trainer / trainee perspectives). <p>2. Recommend adjustments and promote new pathway as good practice.</p>	2 years with ongoing monitoring	<p>Reference Group of employers, GTCs, NUEITAB, industry and training stakeholders, Government, ANTA, technical and industry regulators</p> <p>NCVER – performance measures</p>	<p>New pathway introduced and evaluated against identified goals</p> <p>Successful new pathway promoted as good practice</p>

OBJECTIVE 3.2

Identify, develop and pilot appropriate pathways and promote streamlined training arrangements for mature-age New Apprentices entering or currently in training.

Outcome	Strategy	Duration/Timeline	Lead Agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
<p>Needs / issues relevant to mature-age New Apprenticeships identified</p> <p>Good practice identified</p>	<p>1. Research current training arrangements for mature-age apprentices. Focus questions can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ are New Apprentices over 25 responding to a demand for new skill sets? ❖ is there a difference between trades qualifications achieved and the attrition rates of older entrants and those of young people? ❖ are there adjustments to entry-level pay rates and any related industrial relations issues in response to mature age apprenticeships? ❖ are recognition of prior learning (RPL) arrangements more commonly used for New Apprentices of this age? ❖ is there evidence of alternative or more streamlined training pathways in these New Apprenticeships, such as the provision of more specific customised training? and ❖ are mature-age trainees in particular following alternative non-structured training or career pathways? 	6 months	Taskforce to set up a Reference Group of representatives from NACs, NECA, CEPU, ACCI / ACTU, NCVET, Skill Centres, VET, researchers	Current good practice facilitating entry of mature-age trainees identified.
<p>Best practice / models in facilitating mature-age entry into New Apprenticeships identified and promoted / publicised</p>	<p>1. Identify successful or model approaches to issues relevant to mature-age apprentices (customised training, extended RPL, adjustments to industrial and pay arrangements, relevant qualifications / prior career experience).</p> <p>2. Publicise best practice models, new pathways and / or adjusted arrangements to employers in order to facilitate mature-age entry into training.</p>	12-18 months	Reference Group reporting to the Taskforce	<p>Best practice models supported, publicised and promoted by industry.</p> <p>Increased inquiries and use of best practice models.</p> <p>Increased numbers of mature-age entry into training.</p>

OBJECTIVE 4.1 EVALUATION OF REGULATORY, LEGISLATIVE OR SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO NEW APPRENTICESHIPS

OBJECTIVE 4.1

Identify and implement a national industry initiative in response to identified, legislative, regulatory and systemic barriers to entry and retention in electrotechnology trades training.

Outcome	Strategy	Duration/Timeline	Lead Agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
Regulatory / legislative barriers to entry and completion of New Apprenticeships identified	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research data on initial enquiries or reasons for attrition in the electrotechnology industry to identify impediments arising from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ industry regulations and / or ❖ complex State-based legislative requirements (vocational training orders, implementation guides etc). 2. Monitor current systems and processes to identify systemic barriers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ accessing correct training and career information ❖ selecting applicants who have awareness and aptitude for the industry 	Ongoing	In addition to the Commonwealth review of Legislative and training practices nationally, the Taskforce will explore specific issues in relation to electrotechnology and input to the broader framework through the National Cross-Industry Steering Committee process	Regulatory, legislative and systemic barriers to entry, retention and completion of contracts of training defined and prioritised.
As part of the entry, retention and completion of contracts of training in electrotechnology, improved mentoring / support services using successful case studies of effective mentoring / support arrangements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and monitor effectiveness of all New Apprenticeship support frameworks, including assessment of effectiveness of changed New Apprenticeship Centres (NACs) requirements arising from the second round contracts in conjunction with the National Cross-Industry Steering Committee to identify further needs for mentoring/support services. 2. Research and identify current good practice case studies of effective mentoring or support arrangements for employers and New Apprentices in the industry 	Ongoing	Reference Group reporting to the Taskforce NACs DETYA NUEITAB	Current support systems monitored and evaluated for effectiveness. Good / best practice case studies identified.

Outcome	Strategy	Duration / timeline	Lead agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
Mentor / support pilot developed and in place	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult with industry and regulatory bodies to examine adjustments or alternative pathways as solutions to problems arising from current regulatory requirements. 2. Initiate a national Government / industry response to issues arising from complex State-based legislation. 3. Identify and pilot an industry-specific support / mentor initiative based on a best practice case study to provide advice or the support services of a third party for New Apprentices or their employers if difficulties are encountered during the apprenticeship period. 	Ongoing	Reference Group working in conjunction with the National Cross-Industry Steering Committee and reporting to the Taskforce	<p>Initiatives introduced as solutions to identified problems arising from existing regulatory and legislative arrangements and systems.</p> <p>Appropriate adjustments to regulation / legislation and support systems identified and initiated.</p>

OBJECTIVE 5.1 A STREAMLINED RESPONSE TO DEMAND FOR NEW SKILL SETS

OBJECTIVE 5.1

Co-ordinate relevant industry research to ensure regular updates on changing needs for structured training in electrotechnology and market demand in new technology areas

Outcome	Strategy	Duration/Timeline	Lead Agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
Key information necessary to ensure informed industry response to changing needs established	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult with relevant research bodies (NCVER, DEWRSB, DETYA) to identify appropriate sources of relevant information and issues relating to collection of data (eg currency of relevant training statistics, monitoring of developments in technology, identifying and projecting changes in market demand). 2. Establish characteristics of key information required and frequency of reports. 	Ongoing	Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce	Details of required reporting mechanisms and key information items confirmed.
Quality providers of data and research relevant to changing technology, market demand and training in electrotechnology identified and commissioned	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate research bodies providing VET data relevant to the electrotechnology industry with reference to sources and currency of information, clients, regularity / accessibility of reports, expertise and experience relevant to the industry. 2. Research bodies monitoring developments in technology, including established industry or enterprise reporting mechanisms. 3. Work with providers of relevant information on VET activities, to ensure that changing technology and market demand in the electrotechnology industry is met, and seek regular reports on identified key information items. 	Ongoing	Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce	<p>Sources of relevant data confirmed and research bodies contracted.</p> <p>Regular reports produced.</p>

OBJECTIVE 5.2

Investigate actual and emerging needs for communications and electronic and office equipment tradespersons and identify an appropriate response

Outcome	Strategy	Duration / timeline	Lead agency and Responsibility	Performance Indicators
<p>Current and projected business need for these trades and for the specific training pathways identified</p> <p>Increased uptake of NA training for these specific trades</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate current and projected business needs for these trades. 2. Examine attrition rates and characteristics of entrants into training (eg age, career change) for these trades to identify how far current training and career pathways meet the needs of entrants and existing trainees. 3. Examine alternative pathways to achieving competency in these trade skills, ie identify how far present industry need for these skills is actually being met by electrical tradespersons. 4. Define the level of need for New Apprenticeships for these specific trades. 	<p>8 months and then ongoing</p>	<p>Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce</p> <p>ACCI (economic analysis)</p>	<p>Current and projected business need defined.</p> <p>Relevance of current training pathway and of alternative pathways defined.</p>
<p>Campaign to increase employer and RTO awareness and promotion of training for these trades in place as appropriate</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to the findings of above research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ conduct a marketing / promotional campaign to increase numbers of New Apprenticeships available in the specified trades and the number of entrants into training ❖ identify target employers to promote commitment to contracts of training in these specific trades ❖ promote training to potential trainees who meet identified characteristics ❖ promote alternative or new training pathways to achieve required skills as appropriate. 	<p>12-18 months</p>	<p>Electrotechnology Industry Taskforce (Reference Group)</p> <p>(NUEITAB)</p> <p>(ANTA)</p>	<p>Increase in numbers of opportunities available and of commencements in New Apprenticeships for communications, electronic and office equipment tradespersons.</p> <p>Strategies developed and in place.</p> <p>Increase in employer and RTO knowledge of industry and take-up of NA training.</p>