
Terry Moran, CEO ANTA


The new strategy is the national vocational education and training sector's strategic response to the major forces for change which are transforming Australian life.

These forces for change are:

- the growth in global markets accompanied by intensified international competition and the lowering of tariffs in Australia
- the emergence of service and knowledge-based industries as important sources of employment
- changes in the geographical and regional distribution of employment opportunities
- the impact of new information and communication technologies on the community in general and Australian enterprises in particular
- the growth in small business and changes in working arrangements such as increasing part-time and casual employment, and the use of outsourcing arrangements and labour hire firms
- changes in the ways in which work is organised within enterprises such as the use of flatter business structures and an emphasis on teamwork and multiskilling
- demographic changes such as the ageing of the Australian population (although some groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, are experiencing a reduction in the average age), the ethnic diversity of the population and the feminisation of the labour force
- social changes such as those brought on by changes in family structures, lifestyles, sources of income and personal aspirations
- community expectations that all Australians, including those who are most disadvantaged, should have the opportunity to realise their full potential, including through education and employment opportunities
- the continuing need to reduce the level of unemployment
- increasingly sophisticated consumer expectations about the range and quality of products and services
- changes in governments' roles away from direct service provision to the purchasing of services, with an increased focus on competitive processes and purchasing outputs.
The strategy analyses these economic, industrial and social forces for change and their likely implications for the VET system over the next five years. It sets out a vision for vocational education and training, aligned with the key objectives agreed by Ministers, as well as strategies to ensure these objectives are achieved.

The first National Strategy, Towards a Skilled Australia, was released in 1994 and covered the period up to 1997. That strategy provided the framework for the establishment of a genuinely national approach to vocational education and training. The reforms which the first national strategy underpinned have enabled vocational education and training to more directly support national economic objectives, while continuing to assist millions of Australians achieve personal and employment goals.

The new strategy examines the way the implementation of recently agreed reforms, such as the Australian Recognition Framework and New Apprenticeships, will allow the development of high quality and relevant vocational education and training products.

It is my view that these products will support enterprises, individuals and training providers in responding to the forces of change.

However, consolidation of existing reforms is not enough. Still more is required of the vocational education and training system.

Reform must continue as complex economic, technological and social changes impact on people's daily lives, and pose new challenges and opportunities for Australian enterprises.

The national strategy is not just ANTA’s national strategy. I believe it expresses the collective commitment to the future of vocational education and training by Australian governments in partnership with Australian industry.

[Copies of the strategy will be available from ANTA in June.]

Terry Moran is Chief Executive Officer of the Australian National Training Authority

"The new National Strategy will be used to guide vocational education and training in Australia into the new millennium."

TERRY MORAN

For those interested in issues relating to the strategy, watch out for ANTA’s national conference entitled

CREATING OUR FUTURE—A NEW TRAINING CULTURE FOR AUSTRALIA

The conference will be held in Brisbane on 23-26 August. For more information, phone 1800 061 415.