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**Communiqué for the COAG Skills Council Meeting**  
**20 September 2019**

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The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Skills Council (the Council) held its inaugural meeting, as a standalone Council, today in Melbourne. Skills ministers agreed on key priorities to ensure Australian vocational education and training (VET) is a responsive, dynamic and trusted sector that delivers an excellent standard of education and training.

***Delivering on the COAG vision for vocational education and training***

Council considered the shared vision for the VET system agreed by COAG on 9 August 2019 and agreed on reform priorities and discussed short, medium and long term areas for action to inform the delivery of a shared reform roadmap to COAG in early 2020. Council tasked skills officials with developing the draft roadmap for consideration at the next Council meeting in November.

Members agreed three future priorities for VET system improvements:

- *Relevance* – actions in this area will ensure that VET is relevant and responsive to the job market, employers, industry and learners.
- *Quality* – actions in this area will support public confidence in the quality and value of VET for students throughout their lives and move it to parity with the higher education system.
- *Accessibility* – actions in this area will ensure all prospective students and employers can access suitable information and training when and where it is required, and include a specific focus on supporting access for disadvantaged Australians.

Council agreed on the importance of placing learners at the centre of VET reform, including those of all ages and at all stages of their learning journey and career.

Members also agreed that industry taking greater responsibility for the skills and training of their workforce will be central to the achievement of the COAG vision for VET.

The Council acknowledged the shared responsibility for VET across all jurisdictions and the importance of a viable and robust system of both public and private provision of VET.

***Regulation of the national training system***

Council confirmed effective regulation is central to the quality of and confidence in the VET sector.

Members agreed that the national regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) should improve its engagement with the VET sector and expand its educative role. Both the Braithwaite Review of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* and the Expert Review of VET emphasised it is critical to ensure that training providers are aware of, and supported to understand, their compliance requirements, and that regulatory decisions are transparent.

Members called for immediate work to be done to reform ASQA's regulatory approach, improve confidence in the regulator and support continuous improvement in training provision across the VET sector.

Council also considered recommendations to address quality concerns relating to unduly short training. Members agreed to change the Standards for Training Packages to allow for the

development of minimum training durations in exceptional high-risk circumstances.

### ***Industry relevant training***

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) presents one of the largest job creation opportunities in Australian history, with a significant increase in the workforce over the next five years. The Council welcomed a report on progress developing a NDIS workforce strategy being led by South Australia and remains committed to engagement between skills and disability officials on development of a national plan.

Council agreed to take urgent action to streamline training package development, update and implementation to make it faster, simpler and more responsive. The Council will consider report recommendations at the next meeting.

The Council welcomed progress on the expansion of the unique student identifier into higher education and the opportunities for students to engage with lifelong learning.

The Council also endorsed the thirty-four training packages approved by the Australian Industry and Skills Committee:

- MAR Maritime
- DEF Defence
- AUM Automotive Manufacturing
- AHC Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management training package
- ACM Animal Care and Management training package
- ICP Printing and Graphic Arts
- MSM Manufacturing
- MSS Sustainability
- RII Resources and Infrastructure Industry
- TLI Transport and Logistics
- ICT Information and Communications Technology
- AUR Automotive Retail, Service and Repair
- CPP Property Services
- MSF Furnishing
- PPM Pulp and Paper Manufacturing
- UEP ESI Generation
- AVI Aviation
- BSB Business Services training package - Cross-sector Teamwork and Communication with the inclusion for people with a disability
- NWP Water
- CPC Construction, Plumbing and Services - Concreting
- FWP Forest and Wood Products
- TAE Training and Education training package - Cross-sector inclusion of people with a disability
- ICT Information and Communications Technology
- MEA Aeroskills
- MST Textiles, Clothing and Footwear
- POL Police
- PUA Public Safety
- SFI Seafood Industry
- AMP Meat Processing
- FSK Foundation Skills
- RGR Racing
- SIR Wholesale and Retail
- SIS Sport, Fitness and Recreation
- UET Electricity Supply Transmission, Distribution and Rail