



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 26 August 2009

GREEN SKILLS MUST BE RELEVANT TO BUSINESS

Statement by Mr Greg Evans, Acting Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, has released the details of a new study of the views and practices of Australian employers to 'Green Jobs/Green Skills' and the capability of the Australian Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector to provide adequate training in environmental skills needed by apprentices and trainees.

Skills strategies that enhance environmental management and sustainability will be an important component of future skills needs across the Australian workforce.

The study finds that 82% of the 400 businesses surveyed recognise that the Australian business community has a responsibility to lower carbon emissions and that 65% recognise the importance of a supply of "green skilled" jobs in Australia to meet the future demands of lower carbon emissions and sustainable business practice.

However the survey also indicated that environmental management and sustainability skills need to be directly relevant to the skills needs of business and industry if they are to have any real relevance to the Australian business community. 33.6% of respondents reported that they didn't have green skill jobs now and 32.4% of survey respondents said that employing a person with green skills would not benefit their business.

ACCI considers that there is significant danger in simply imposing a range of generic environmental management systems skills (EMS) training within a qualification structure without any real relevance to the on-the-job practices of businesses.

Unless the training is directly tied to industry standards of practice, generic EMS skills will have little or no real life specificity when applied in the workplace. This may ultimately detract from industry specific technical skills and increase the likelihood of a mismatch of skills with the needs of employers upon the completion of training.

ACCI supports the take-up of the values, knowledge, skills, and technologies required to promote environmentally sustainable business practices where there is direct demand.

To help achieve this, it will be necessary to work with businesses to identify areas where managers and workers can develop relevant EMS skills. This will assist businesses to lessen their environmental impact whilst remaining competitive and continuing to increase productivity.

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ACCI represents over 350,000 businesses in every State and Territory and all industries. Our network employs around 4 million employees, ranging from the top 100 companies to tens of thousands of small and medium businesses.

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