

GSA REPORT



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INTRODUCTION TO GSA

Government Skills Australia (GSA) is one of 11 industry skills councils funded by a department of the Federal Government - the Department of Industry, Innovation, Industry, Science, Research and tertiary education.

The mandate of Australia's Industry Skills Councils is to bring together industry, educators and governments and unite them on a common industry-led agenda for action on skills and workforce development.

Industries Skills Councils are governed by independent, industry led boards and are not-for-profit companies.

GSA works closely with industry associations, enterprises, unions, RTO's and state industry training advisory bodies to name a few.

GSA provides industry intelligence on skill needs and training solutions to the Australian government and industry to develop a skilled workforce.

GSA supports the workforce and skills development in the industry sectors we represent by:

1. Collecting Industry intelligence and conducting research to inform government policy.
2. Workforce Development Services This includes support information, advice and assistance with workforce planning, development and funding applications.
3. GSA also develops and maintains industry Training Packages through liaison with industry, RTO's, state ITABS, industry associations.

GSA's 4 main functions

1. Industry Research
2. Training packages– NWP.
3. Workforce development
4. Funding

Industry Research

GSA collects data and industry intelligence on skills needs and training solutions for the Australian government and for industry to develop a skilled workforce.

GSA's philosophy in collecting data is to; survey annually, use what data is available and share our data.

Once we have our data we produce the annual E Scan. GSA has compiled an Environmental Scan or EScan annually since 2008. Each EScan identifies a range of issues and challenges within the GSA scope of responsibility.

Topics include identified current and emerging market issues, workforce development issues in all our sectors, the impact of the GSA training packages including things like their utilisation.

GSA also conducts or manages research projects. Last year it was the project to propose a framework for the certification of water operators.

This year GSA has produced a report focusing on the use of the training package. This report will be available on our website in the next month.

This year GSA has also funded a feasibility study on the establishment of an apprenticeship for water operators. This report will be available in June this year.

Both reports will also be distributed via my newsletter.

The findings of these projects will assist with planning work and direction for the coming year and content for presentations at future conferences.

Training Packages

The water training package or NWP07 Version 3 will receive much focus of the next 2 years.

The first will be the development and inclusion of an occupations and competency framework. This project will be a huge bonus for the industry. The competency framework will define occupations and the competencies required to do those roles.

In addition the whole package will be reviewed with the new agreed standards. The emphasis on this revision is to remove duplication that not only exists within training packages but across training packages.

GSA can't carry out this work without industry assistance. So I would just like to talk a bit more about the competency framework.

Competency framework, what will it look like and why do we need one??

It will define roles and the competencies for common water industry occupations.

It will also map the competencies to units within the training package to provide a model for training. The competency framework will give industry a national guideline for roles and titles.

By defining the roles that exist we could count how many people we have in these roles nationally. Counting people in roles will assist the ABS to count us and for the government to see us.

The framework will provide a model for training by mapping each role's units within the training package.

As GSA works through the package gaps for further development have emerged, grouped units may form streams and skills sets.

The framework will guide organisations with their training needs.

Project Update

A draft list of occupations is divided into 6 functional groups.

1. Source Management
2. Treatment and Processing
3. Networks
4. Asset management
5. Hydrography
6. Quality Management

We have formed our first 2 technical reference group. The hydrography group met in March and our treatment and processing group met in April. GSA is close to having a draft framework for the hydrographers already. We expect to have a complete draft framework with the entire framework by November this year.

Please make sure you or someone in your organisation is watching the development of the framework. I have listed the methods by which I am communicating. Take my card or leave yours to get in contact.

Workforce Development

There are many definitions of workforce development however, GSA are guided by the definition taken from Skills Australia;

Workforce development are policies and practices which support people to; participate effectively in the workforce develop and apply skills in a workplace, where learning translates into positive outcomes for enterprises, the wider community and for individuals throughout their working lives.

When I first started with GSA I heard the words workforce development and workforce planning used interchangeably.

Workforce planning is “what have I got and what do I need?”

Workforce development is the “how do I get there”.

GSA can help with planning by offering an audit service, information and guidance. We also like to promote successes with case studies.

So to summarise GSA have; Workshops and Audit services to assist organisations determine their workforce planning issues.

We have workforce development information, tools and guidelines to help and support organisations achieve this.

Funding

State funding for some of you may not be as attractive as it once was.

GSA has a dedicated funding co-ordinator who will help you determine if you are eligible for any funding and assist with making the application.

GSA is now also a broker for WELL funding.

In most instances organisations will need some type of workforce plan. So organisations need to complete the workforce planning stage and have a plan to justify what they are asking to be funded.

The main funds are National workforce development fund and workforce English language and literacy or WELL. GSA can help organisations look at what funding might be the best offering.

We have a small team that can help guide you. So have a look on our website.

In summary GSA have 4 main functions.

Industry research – the annual E Scan and data collection. Our one off research projects – last year certification and this year the feasibility of a trade pathway for water operators.

Training packages – building a competency framework and reviewing the package to meet the new standard. Enhancement to include new units, streams or skill sets.

Workforce development – encouraging and supporting organisations to plan and manage their workforce with information, tools, workshops and case studies.

Funding – our funding coordinator who helps organisations with applications and find the best fund.