



Motor Trades Association of Australia

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Sir / Madam

I write to you on behalf of the Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) in relation to the Discussion Paper released by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) on 1 April 2008, titled *Skilling Australia for the Future*.

MTAA is the peak national representative organisation for the retail, service and repair sector of the Australian automotive industry. The Association represents the interests, at the national level, of over 100,000 retail motor trade businesses with a combined turnover of over \$120 billion and which employ over 316,000 people. The Association is a federation of the various state and territory motor trades associations, as well as the Service Station Association (SSA) and the Australian Automobile Dealers Association (AADA). MTAA also has a number of Affiliated Trade Associations (ATAs), which represent particular sub-sectors of the retail motor trades ranging from motor vehicle body repair to automotive parts recycling.

MTAA is a shareholder in Automotive Training Australia (ATA), along with the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). ATA was formed in 1990 with its purpose being the formulation of nationally consistent high quality training for the automotive industry. MTAA is aware that ATA has lodged a submission with DEEWR in relation to the Skilling Australia Discussion Paper. MTAA wishes to advise DEEWR that it fully endorses and supports the comments made within the ATA submission.

In particular, MTAA shares ATA's belief that the present Industry Skills Council (ISC) structure may not benefit the automotive training sector. All of ATA's shareholders are firm in the belief that the skills and training interests of the automotive sector are best served by a dedicated, stand-alone, automotive Industry Skills Council.

MTAA notes ISCs will be funded to undertake training needs analyses of business enterprises. As the majority of the automotive industry is in the category of small to medium sized businesses, there are thousands of enterprises nationally who will not be able to obtain the benefit of this focused and customised approach to workforce planning. Small automotive employers in particular are in dire need of such advice and assistance, but without a funded ISC this will not be accessible to them.

MTAA can see the possibility of the benefits offered through Skilling Australia being lost to the automotive industry through an inability for ATA to access funding, and also by virtue of no contact points being available for retail motor traders for the matters covered by Skilling Australia.

If you would like to discuss any of these issues please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Delaney". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

MICHAEL DELANEY
Executive Director

1 May 2008