AHC Improvements Project Consultation Strategy

This Consultation Strategy for the **AHC Improvements project** includes:

- a project snapshot
- the stakeholder groups to engage, their purpose or reason for being involved
- communications channels and tools required to effectively engage with stakeholders
- details about consultation workshops
- processes for collecting and responding to stakeholder feedback.

Project snapshot

Project type: fast-track, 6 months

Timeline:

- Commencement: 30 June 2023
- Public and Government Consultation Draft 1: 8 September – 6 October 2023
- Incorporating Feedback: October 2023
- Public and Government Consultation Draft 2 (Validation): November 2023
- Senior Officials Check: December 2023
- Finalisation and Submission to Assurance Body: January 2024
- Skills Ministers Endorsement: March 2024

Scope/expected outcomes: Several qualifications and skill sets need to be updated to incorporate units of competency that have been developed or revised in recent projects. In particular, several work health and safety and environmental care related units have been updated which are core units in numerous qualifications.

The Consultation Strategy focuses on consulting with trainers and industry for each specific sector to hear if those using the qualifications have any comments about the inclusion of the units, so that all relevant information has been considered before updates are made.

Skills Insight will capture all stakeholder feedback, including any suggestions requesting changes to qualifications or skill sets outside of project scope and record this for future project consideration.

Website: A dedicated project webpage on the Skills Insight website has detailed information about the project plan, scope and consultation: skillsinsight.com.au/ahcimprovements.

Stakeholder Consultation

A list of key stakeholder organisations has been identified for this project. Skills Insight will ensure contact is made with each of these organisations during the development of this project to seek their involvement and their views on the draft training products. Consultation is not limited to the organisations on this list. This list simply helps us to identify those organisations that, because of their industry role, size or specialty, are likely to have a key interest in the development and outcomes of this project. All and any interested industry participants are encouraged to engage in the consultation of this project, when the draft units are available for feedback via this webpage and workshops that take place.

Engagement Strategy

1. Identify Stakeholders: This would include all Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) that offer each qualification and skill set, as they are directly impacted by the project. Additionally, it is important to identify and include stakeholders who represent different occupations, sectors and perspectives, ensuring that the subject matter experts (SMEs) in the Technical Committee provide balanced and varied input.

2. Inform and Engage Stakeholders: Send an initial communication, via email, to all identified stakeholders. This communication will provide details about the project, the issues to be addressed, and the importance of their participation in consultations.

Targeted RTO participation will also encouraged on the proposed updates to the qualifications and skill sets, so that any implications can be considered.

3. Establish the Technical Committee Group: The Technical Committee will be established to act as a focused task force. It will provide technical expertise, guide project decisions and serve as a bridge between the broader stakeholder community perspectives. It's essential that the Technical Committee is representative of all industry sectors within the *AHC Training Package*.

4. Technical Committee Consultation Meetings: Due to the nature of this project and the range of industry sectors it covers, individual meetings and conversations are proposed to communicate with each respective Technical Committee Member/s.

5. Meetings Scheduling: Individual industry sector meetings will be held along with one-on-one phone calls throughout the project.

6. Feedback Loop: Create a robust feedback system to incorporate the insights and suggestions generated during these meetings. This system would help in continually adjusting the project plan as per stakeholder inputs and ensuring their concerns are addressed in a timely manner. (see Feedback section below.)

7. Regular Updates: Document and incorporate the insights and suggestions generated during Technical Committee meetings, Public Consultation workshops etc. Keep all stakeholders updated about the project's progress regularly. Use various methods like email, newsletters, and the project website to share information.

8. Evaluation and Review: Periodically evaluate and review the stakeholder engagement strategy to ensure its effectiveness. Make necessary changes based on the feedback received and the project's evolving needs.

Identified Key Stakeholder Groups

- Representatives from multiple sectors within the *AHC Training* Package that make use of the qualifications that are included in this project, noting that some stakeholders may be suitable to respond for multiple sectors. These sectors may include:
    - Arboriculture
    - Sports Turf
    - Agriculture
    - Farmers
    - Conservation and ecosystem departments
    - Irrigation
    - Dairy Production
    - Production Horticulture
    - Landscaping
    - Nursery Operations
    - Beekeeping
    - Rural Merchandising
    - Pest Management
    - Protected Horticulture
    - Viticulture
    - Agribusiness
    - Medicinal Crops.
- RTOs (especially those with impacted qualifications/skill sets on their scope of registration)
- State/Territory Training Advisory Bodies
- ITABs (or equivalent) with relevant sector coverage
- Other Jobs and Skills Councils who use the units of competency.

Organisations for Targeted Consultations

(Including, but not limited to…)

Organisation	Key Stakeholder Group	Type	State
Arboriculture Australia	Arboriculture	Peak body	National
Australian Sports Turf Managers Association	Sports Turf	Peak body	National
Sports Turf Association of Victoria	Sports Turf	Peak body	VIC
FarmSafe Australia	Agriculture	Peak body	National

Organisation	Key Stakeholder Group	Type	State
FarmSafe Queensland	Agriculture	Peak body	QLD
Dairy Farmers association	Agriculture	Peak body	National
Irrigation Australia	Irrigation	Peak body	National
State Government Departments (e.g. DPI NSW)	Multiple Sectors	Gov. Dep.	NSW
Dept of Education and Training, NSW	Multiple Sectors	Gov. Dep.	NSW
Protected Cropping Australia	Protected Horticulture	Peak body	National
Farmers Federation (National and State bodies)	Multiple Sectors	Peak body	National
Rugby Farms	Production Horticulture	Employer	QLD
4 Upskilling	Multiple Sectors	RTO Private	VIC
Sunraysia TAFE	Multiple Sectors	RTO	VIC
Regional Skills Training SA	Multiple Sectors	RTO Private	SA
TAFE NSW Dubbo	Multiple Sectors	RTO	NSW
TAFE NSW	Multiple Sectors	RTO	NSW
Partners in Ag, VIC	Broadacre Cropping	RTO	VIC
Central Region TAFE WA	Multiple Sectors	RTO	WA
RuralBiz Training, NSW	Multiple Sectors	RTO	NSW

Organisation	Key Stakeholder Group	Type	State
TasTAFE	Multiple Sectors	RTO	TAS
Tocal College	Multiple Sectors	RTO	NSW
Central Regional TAFE WA	Multiple Sectors	RTO	WA

Distribution of key stakeholders

Stakeholder Type	National	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
RTOs			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Industry employer					✓				
Industry association /Peak industry body	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ITAB			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STA/TTA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
RTOs			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Communications channels, tools and purpose

Skills Insight Website

- The [Skills Insight website](#) will be the key information tool, where industry can find all the information they need about the project and activities. This dedicated webpage will exist for the duration of the project which will also include mechanisms for registering interest and feedback, such as registration details for workshops, and surveys for collecting feedback.

Skills Insight newsletter and news alerts

- The Skills Insight general newsletter (approximately monthly) will provide an update to all subscribers on project activities and opportunities to be involved.
- Timely news alerts will also be distributed to project and sector-specific subscribers whenever there is a project update.

Social media

- A useful and timely tool for sharing updates about project development and consultation activities.
- By sharing images from site visits and workshops we can update stakeholders on engagement activities and encourage interest and input into the project.
- Larger project updates will incorporate a link to the Skills Insight website for further information.
- Interested stakeholders to share the posts on their own accounts and networks.
- Social media platforms:
    o [LinkedIn](#)
    o [X](#) (formally Twitter)

Industry media

- A range of key stakeholder organisations with influential newsletters will be encouraged to share news of the project activities and consultation opportunities with their networks.

Email/mail merge

- To engage on topics related to specific stakeholder groups, i.e. RTOs, Government Departments of key industry associations around matters related to delivery, funding or employment considerations.

Workshops and meetings

- To provide further information about:
    o updates to the training package products
    o to ask questions about the project
    o how to provide feedback.

Regular updates to STAs/ITABs/CMM:

- Direct monthly emails to inform of project updates
- One-on-one phone calls to discuss the project and seek feedback (during Draft 1)
- State/Territory based virtual meetings
- Invitations to provide support for final drafts

Consultations

The training package products in this project will be drafted in consultation with subject matter experts and their networks. At the broad public consultation stage, Skills Insight then presents and discusses the draft training package products, collecting feedback from a wide range of stakeholders across the country. Whilst specific public consultation dates are identified, feedback is welcomed at any time, and will help Skills Insight in drafting the training package products. Stakeholders are encouraged to contact the project team via the Skills Insight website.

Consultation type	When/where	Details
Technical Committee meetings with Subject Matter Experts	Phone calls and/or industry specific meetings. Post- public consultation discussions, depending on outcomes of feedback and any follow-up that may be required. SME-only validation workshops – multiple online sessions (as required).	Targeted one-on-one phone calls/industry-specific meetings discussing the changes impacting the qualifications in their respective industry, and seeking support in updating training package products to include the improved units. Additional meetings/phone calls with Technical Committee members will take place if/when required to address any conflicting feedback and/or seek further advice. Validation workshops are to sign-off of any proposed solutions, draft materials and further recommendations. These will likely be broken down to relevant industry sectors.
Virtual public consultation webinars	Proposed 4 public consultation webinars during *Public and Government Consultation* phase. Online.	Focus of this consultation phase is on getting feedback and support for the proposed updates to the qualifications and skill sets with the improved units of competency. Minor edits to 2 existing units of competency, proposed deletion of 4 units of competency and support for a new unit to be added to electives of a qualification will also be consulted on. People from all backgrounds are encouraged to attend and provide feedback/contribute. Additional documentation to include the list of units of competency to be updated in each qualification and skill sets, and to include notes on changes between the current and updated units so that stakeholders have a greater understanding of the impact that updating these qualifications will entail. Surveys will be utilised to be used to capture feedback. Targeted invitations to STAs/ITABS/CMM to attend consultation workshops or individual phone calls/meetings to discuss the project.
Public Validation workshops	Proposed 2 public validation workshops Online	To provide support of any proposed solutions, final draft materials and further recommendations prior to final steps to submit for endorsement.

Feedback

Receiving feedback from a broad range of stakeholders is essential to the training package product development process.

How to provide feedback

- During consultation workshops (virtual and face-to-face)
- Email - Ruth Geldard rgeldard@skillsinsight.com.au
- Feedback surveys - available during development, broad consultation and validation phases on the project's webpage at https://skillsinsight.com.au/ahcimprovements/
- Website contact form - https://skillsinsight.com.au/contact/
- Phone - 03 9321 3526

What happens to the feedback?

All feedback received is recorded in a Consultation Log for the project. This log will be updated after each phase of the project and will be publicly available on the project's webpage at https://skillsinsight.com.au/ahcimprovements/.

This log will include:

- Generic stakeholder information (stakeholder type and location).
- Method feedback was received.
- Feedback received.
- Consideration and proposed resolution, including justification of why feedback may not have been incorporated.
- General summary of all feedback received and how it has been addressed in the draft training package products.

Conflicting feedback

When feedback received is varied and a broad consensus is not able to be achieved from the feedback alone, Skills Insight will engage with subject matter experts in the Technical Committee or other targeted specialists (such as regulators or relevant government departments) for their expertise to work towards an agreeable solution. In some cases, an additional review phase may need to take place followed by another round of public consultation in order to address the draft training package products in question.

After all methods to address conflicting feedback have been undertake and consensus is unable to be reached, a formal dispute resolution process may be undertaken according to the processes outlined in the Training Package Product Development and Endorsement Process Policy.

As with all other feedback, this process and its outcomes will be recorded and made publicly available in the project's Consultation Log.