

16 January 2023

Secretariat
Clean Energy Workforce Capacity Study
Jobs and Skills Australia
CleanEnergyWorkforce@jobsandskills.gov.au

Dear Secretariat

Re: The Clean Energy Workforce Capacity Study - Terms of Reference - Consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed Terms of Reference for the Clean Energy Workforce Capacity Study.

The Victorian TAFE Association (VTA) is the peak body for Victorian TAFE Network, which comprises Victoria's 12 TAFE institutes and four dual sector universities. VTA members will continue to play a central role in developing the clean energy workforce.

The VTA has had close involvement with issues relevant to the Clean Energy Workforce Capacity Study through its membership of the Victorian Clean Economy Skills and Jobs Taskforce. We offer the following comments regarding the proposed Terms of Reference.

Scope of the Study

While the VTA supports the intent of the Study, the draft Terms of Reference doesn't address the skills and education platform which is critical. We recommend including the training and education requirements from schools to tertiary providers that will be required to equip the workforce including product, infrastructure, equipment and timing. Without this inclusion the Study will not contribute to the objectives of addressing the skills needs of industry and the career aspirations of the local labour market.

Specific Terms of Reference

1. Develop an appropriate definition of the Australian clean energy workforce.

While we understand the intent, we suggest replacing 'Develop an appropriate definition' with 'Establish a standard definition' – a standard definition would assist to determine the policy environment that would best catalyse its growth.

2. Establish the current state of the clean energy workforce – including a demographic overview, numbers of employers, job vacancies, and reliance on international specialists.

We suggest including a geographic overview of clean energy and the clean energy workforce in Australia. Many clean energy industries and occupations will be place based and it will be important to have an overview of the current and future geography of clean energy, including the skills base, centres of innovation, and critically, areas of education and skills delivery.

3. Analyse the potential supply (at the national, state and regional level) of clean energy workers over the next 30 years by:

a. identifying the skills required by job roles in the clean energy workforce.

The skills required for the clean economy must be acquired and there is also a need to identify the training and education requirements from schools to tertiary providers that will be required to equip the workforce including product, infrastructure, equipment and the timing to align with demand/supply outcomes.

b. assessing the extent to which the required skills can be met by existing workers, particularly from transitioning sectors, and explore skills mobility and skills transferability between the different renewable energy sources.

We suggest an additional TOR around assessing the capacity and needs of the training system to deliver the range of clean energy workforce skills needs. This additional TOR is central to ensuring a just transition, and that clean energy jobs are secured by the local workforce.

c. examine the training pathways that will support workers entering the clean energy workforce, including new entrants, workers from transitioning industries and migrants, and assess the adequacy of their scope and scale.

We suggest reviewing local experiences in relation to transitioning workers needs be a consideration to inform the practical implications of transitioning workers. Examples such as the decommissioning of coal fired power stations like Hazelwood in Victoria would be useful.

d. consider international supply factors, such as the impact of targeted migration programs including regional labour mobility programs which would also build clean energy skills within our region (particularly the Pacific).

We suggest also considering the capacity of the Australian TAFE and training system to export skilled workers and skill development to build clean energy skills within our region.

5. Explore sector specific barriers faced by small, medium, and large employers in employing and retaining a skilled, diverse workforce in the clean energy sector.

We suggest also exploring the enablers of employing and retaining a skilled and diverse workforce. We are mindful that these are not greenfield issues and there is existing good practice in these areas.

6. Explore opportunities for, and barriers to, full participation in the clean energy sector for priority cohorts, including women, First Nations Australians, people with a disability and culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.

We suggest this TOR should refer explicitly to ensuring the principles of equity and social inclusion are applied to the development of a skilled and diverse clean energy workforce. I

Governance and Consultation

With the strong expectation that TAFEs will be the major providers of skills training for the clean energy sector we would suggest *TAFE and training providers* be inserted into the governance and consultation models, and that TAFE has specific representation on the membership of the Project Steering Group.

On behalf of Victorian TAFE institutes, I thank you for your consideration and trust that our comments will assist the Project Steering Group in reviewing the Terms of Reference for the study.

Yours sincerely

Dugald Murray

Executive Director