# New arrangements for the development and review of training packages

The development of training packages is now based on principles agreed by the COAG Industry and Skills Council (CISC) in May 2015. These principles are that training packages must:

* 1. reflect identified workforce outcomes
  2. support national (and international) portability of skills and competencies, including reflecting licensing and regulatory requirements
  3. reflect national agreement about the core transferrable skills and core job-specific skills required for job roles as identified by industry
  4. be flexible enough to meet the diversity of individual and employer needs, including the capacity to adapt to changing job roles and workplaces
  5. facilitate recognition of an individual’s skills and competencies and support movement between the school, vocational education and higher education sectors
  6. support interpretation by training providers and others through the use of simple, concise language and clear articulation of assessment requirements.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The Australian Government has introduced a new framework for engaging industry in the development of training packages that will guide the delivery of VET. The new training package framework consists of three key entities:

* 1. the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC)
  2. Industry Reference Committees (IRCs)
  3. Skills Service Organisations (SSOs)

### The Australian Industry and Skills Committee

The AISC’s role is to provide advice to CISC to ensure that the directions taken by Ministers are informed by an industry-based perspective focused on the quality and relevance of training in VET. As part of this role the AISC will oversee the review and development of training packages, with the objective of ensuring Australian workers are provided with industry-relevant skills that meet the future needs of employers.

The functions of the AISC – as set out in the CISC Terms of Reference are to:

* 1. advise on the implementation of national training policies
  2. quality assure and sign off training packages for implementation
  3. oversee the process for development and approval of accredited training
  4. provide direction on the VET sector research priorities, including the work of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research
  5. provide advice to CISC on training provider and regulator standards
  6. coordinate industry engagement through CISC meetings
  7. undertake work as directed by CISC.

As part of its role in overseeing the process for reviewing and developing training packages, the AISC is establishing a network of Industry Reference Committees.

### Industry Reference Committees (IRCs)

IRCs are the industry engagement mechanism at the centre of training package development providing a conduit for industry feedback to government on industry trends and for promotion of VET to employers.

IRCs are the formal point through which industry requirements for skills are considered and defined in training packages.

There will not be a ‘one-size-fits-all’ formula for the composition of IRC membership. IRCs are comprised of industry representatives with expertise from a cross-section of the particular industry or sector tailored to the particular circumstances of that industry or sector. The primary purpose of the IRC is to provide advice to the AISC about the skills needs of their industry or sector, based on their experience and expertise,

Participation on IRCs is voluntary and represents a part of industry’s ‘in-kind contribution’ to the operation of a robust VET system that underpins skilled and productive workforces.

IRCs are required to direct SSOs in the review, development and implementation of training package content relevant to the industry sectors they cover.

IRCs are expected to perform the following functions (supported by their SSO as required):

* 1. Gather general intelligence for their industry sectors to inform advice on training package development and review
  2. Oversight the development and review of training packages in accordance with the requirements of the AISC
  3. Oversight the development of the IRC workplan by the SSO, advising who should be included in the consultation and the type of information to include
  4. Provide sign off on the workplan, business cases, cases for endorsement and other submissions for consideration by the AISC
  5. Report to the AISC on progress of its work
  6. Promote the use of VET in the sectors they represent.

In the course of the development and maintenance of training packages, an IRC may directly, or through its SSO, establish and work through one or more Technical Advisory Committees (TACs). A TAC may, for example, include technical industry experts, industry associations, regulators and training providers, and can assist the IRC by providing technical input to the review and development of training packages.

### Skills Service Organisations

The role of SSOs is to provide services to a range of IRCs, to ensure training packages reflect the skills needs of industry. SSOs provide technical, operational and secretariat services to enable IRCs to undertake their industry engagement and training package development and review activities.

SSOs support industry engagement while remaining independent from both industry and the training sector itself. SSOs are governed by boards whose members can demonstrate independence as well as strategic capability and professional expertise.