



Professional Development Committee (PDC)

1. Terms of Reference

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the PDC is to assist IAL to facilitate and provide high quality irrigation training, qualifications and Certification services to the irrigation industry and its clientele, through regular strategic review processes and recommendations to IAL CEO, IAL's Board and IAL's Certification Board.

1.2 Function

To fulfil its purpose the PDC will perform the following functions:

- continuous review of industry training needs;
- periodic review of the quality, availability and suitability of existing skills assessment and training services and qualifications relative to current industry training needs;
- periodic identification of existing training and qualification gaps which need to be addressed to fully meet current industry and clientele needs;
- periodic assessment of whether existing training adequately supports IAL's Certification program;
- periodic assessment of whether the structure of IAL's Certification program adequately services contemporary industry needs;
- review of IAL training related documents/publications;
- liaise as required with the Certification Board on linkages between training, qualifications and IAL's Certification program and QA processes;
- development of IAL policy on training related matters, for consideration and ratification by IAL Board;
- making recommendations to IAL CEO, IAL Board and IAL Certification Board as required in relation to any of the above functions; and
- additional specific irrigation training related review functions requested by the IAL CEO.

The PDC may form small, purpose based sub-committees or groups from time to time as appropriate to ensure relevant expertise, skills and advice is harnessed to undertake these functions. These sub-committees or groups will not be separately financed by IAL.

2. About the PDC's Functions

2.1 Continuous Review of Industry Training Needs

The review of industry training needs will be continuous and will include:

- investigation of industry related training needs; and importantly
- environmental scans of future clientele groups (eg policy makers); and

- environmental scans of the needs of all client groups such as industry operators, governments and the public, including the nature of upcoming funding programs that will need professional irrigation services, survey results such as ABARE's research into irrigator investment intentions, likely regulatory and policy changes in each jurisdiction etc.

The review will serve as on-going industry development needs analysis, which will service not only training needs, but also provide an important component of IAL's broader strategic planning processes.

The product from this review will be a continuously updated compendium with:

- a description of upcoming challenges or opportunities for the irrigation industry;
- a schedule for each irrigation vocation (recognised through IAL's Certification framework) describing current training needs, known issues and the nature of likely upcoming training needs relative to the identified challenges and opportunities; and
- a mind map showing the linkages between each irrigation vocation – which will form the basis of a career path.

2.2 Periodic Review of Existing Training, Qualifications and Gaps

The review of existing training and gaps would need to be undertaken approximately once every two years, to enable IAL adequate time to properly and effectively respond to any identified issues and to then permit time for the evaluation of any changes.

The review of existing training and qualifications would serve as a base QA process, examining both IAL and other RTO training services to assess whether these services match the compendium of contemporary industry needs from section 2.1. In particular, the review would assess the:

- accuracy and quality of technical content and training resources relative to contemporary industry needs;
- mode of service provision and whether this meets the contemporary industry needs;
- skills assessment processes and contents of irrigation qualifications, and whether these are producing irrigation professionals with skills, knowledge and competencies required to meet contemporary industry needs and opportunities, and to support the IAL's Certification program;
- accessibility of training services relative to industry needs, including, but not necessarily limited to:
 - geographic spread relative to the industry and clientele needs;
 - whether RTOs can accommodate the quantity of training required to meet contemporary industry needs in timeframes required; and
- adequacy of marketing for training services throughout the industry ie is the industry aware of career paths and training services along these pathways?.

The product from this review of existing training and qualifications would be specific recommendations for IAL including, but not limited to:

- strategic work IAL needs to do with AgriFoods and the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations to improve irrigation related qualifications, and the units of competency within these qualifications;
- strategic work IAL needs to do with RTOs to respond to findings of the review process about content, assessment processes and accessibility of training related services;

- development and/or refinement of training resources such as presentation tools and supporting documentation, especially to ensure they reflect any minimum industry standards adopted since the previous review;
- work required by IAL to fill gaps that are unlikely to be serviced by other RTOs;
- work IAL needs to undertake to improve marketing of irrigation related training services.

2.3 Review of IAL Certifications

The PDC will also review IAL's Certifications and make recommendations to the IAL Certification Board or IAL Board as appropriate, with a view to ensuring:

- the types of Certifications reflect the contemporary needs of the industry and the marketplace in which the industry is operating and is likely to be operating in the future;
- the pathways for obtaining each Certification are suitable and adequate for servicing the contemporary industry needs; and
- the types of competencies required for each Certification reflect the competencies that are required for that vocation in the contemporary marketplace;
- training and skills assessment services are made available through RTO's or through IAL to support pathways to each IAL Certification type; and
- adequate marketing of Certification framework to the industry and customers (government/policy makers and community)

The Certification Board may subsequently request the IAL to undertake specified work to respond to PDC recommendations endorsed by the Certification Board.

2.4 IAL Training Related Policy

The PDC will develop and recommend training related policy for ratification by the IAL Board. Policy matters dealt with by PDC may include, but will not necessarily be limited to:

- positions on IAL's role and status as an RTO eg. "RTO of last resort" and how this will be applied in practice and communicated to other RTOs;
- method of referral of IAL members to RTOs eg. are there preferred RTOs for particular competencies, and if so on what basis has IAL made this determination;
- training records management processes and access to training records (eg databases on competency attainment by IAL members and others);

The product of this function will be formally articulated, IAL Board approved training policy positions that are readily available to all IAL staff and members. This will enable IAL members to understand IAL's position, and enable IAL staff to communicate consistent messages in respect to IAL's position on training related matters.

2.5 Review of IAL Training Related Documents/Publications

All IAL's training related documents and resources (including policy positions above) need to have a specified review date. The PDC will be chartered with reviewing these documents at the specified review date. The product of this PDC review of documents and publications may range from recommendations for specific amendments to documents, to more broader recommendations such as for technical panel/consultancy re-drafting of documents, or the development of new documents and publications.

3. Proposed Operation of the PDC

To fulfil the purpose and functions described in the Terms of Reference above, the PDC will need to meet face-to-face at least twice a year, with further teleconferences arranged on an as needs basis. The functions can be programmed for these meetings as follows:

- Meeting One (jn each year):
Review of Industry Training Needs
Review of Existing Training (in alternate years)
Review of Documents (that may be up for review)
- Meeting Two (in each year):
Review of IAL Certifications
Review of IAL Training Policy Positions

The face-to-face meetings will be as long as required for specific meeting agendas, but may be up to two days in length.

Out-of-Session Work and Meeting Preparation

Each PDC member will be allocated responsibility for oversight of one or more of these functions. The out-of-session work and papers to inform these meetings will be prepared by relevant IAL staff or IAL members as appropriate and at the direction of the IAL CEO, but under the guidance of the responsible PDC member.

The meetings will be arranged and scheduled by IAL's Training Development Manager.

Outputs from Meetings

PDC Meeting Minutes must be recorded and made available to IAL's CEO. The PDC Meeting Minutes must include recommendations made by the PDC, with a record of the rationale behind the recommendation.

Meeting Costs

The IAL will reimburse travel related expenses of PDC members.

4. PDC Membership

The attributes that PDC membership will need to collectively have are:

- technical irrigation training and assessment skills;
- knowledge of education bureaucracies, and training frameworks;
- industry practitioners, with on-ground experience of industry needs, difficulties and market conditions;
- knowledge of internal IAL processes, structures and capabilities;

Given these required attributes the PDC will be comprised of members as follows:

- representative(s) from government agencies with a contemporary interest in irrigation training and assessment services;
- representative(s) from RTOs offering training and assessment services;
- IAL member(s) that are also professional irrigation service providers (designer, agronomist, installer, operator);
- IAL's Training Development Manager; and
- IAL's CEO (at his or her volition/need), or a designated nominee of the IAL CEO.

Members will be appointed for a two year period (to enable them to participate in the Review of Existing Training that will occur in alternate years).