



Meat Industry Association of New Zealand (Incorporated)

Submission on:

## **Options for the Future of Work-based Learning**

21 February 2025

### **1. Introduction**

- 1) The Meat Industry Association (MIA) is a voluntary, membership-based organisation representing processors, marketers, and exporters of New Zealand red meat, rendered products, and hides and skins. MIA represents 99 percent of domestic red meat production and exports. With export revenues of \$9.86 billion (2024), the red meat industry is New Zealand's second largest goods exporter.
- 2) The meat processing sector is New Zealand's largest manufacturing sector that employs over 25,000 people in about 60 processing plants, located mainly in the regions. The sector is a significant employer in many of New Zealand's rural communities and contributes over \$4 billion in household income.
- 3) A list of members is attached (Appendix A). In drafting this submission MIA members were consulted. Individual members, however, may have also made their own submissions.

## 2. Executive Summary

- I. MIA is appreciative of the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals.
- II. MIA recommends that the ***independent*** work-based learning model is **strongly preferred** when compared with the *collaborative* model.
- III. MIA concludes that the *independent work-based learning* model is likely to lead to better quality pastoral care for learners and is more efficient.
- IV. MIA considers that the *collaborative* work-based learning model would be impractical if applied to the red meat industry.
- V. MIA notes that the independent model is likely to lead to a more seamless transition for learners, which is highly desirable.
- VI. The substantial historic and ongoing investment by the red meat industry in developing learning materials must be formally recognised and protected during the transition to the new work-based learning arrangements, irrespective of model chosen.

## 3. Overview

- 4) MIA welcomes the opportunity to comment on the two models for work-based learning that the Government is considering.
- 5) The meat industry is New Zealand's largest manufacturing sector that employs over 23,470 people across more than 60 meat processing and rendering plants, many of which are located in rural and provincial areas. NZIER<sup>1</sup> and MPI forecast continued growth across our members' workforces out to 2032.
- 6) To meet this demand, meat processors will require employees with a range of skills including increasing focus on more highly skilled workers, especially managers and semi-autonomous workers who are savvy with digital technology, quality control and environmental practices.
- 7) However, training and assessment of competency for workers in medium-skilled roles forms the core of formal vocational training and development in the meat industry. This training is delivered and assessed by colleagues 'on the job' and in most cases cannot be replicated in the classroom.

Consultation Question 1. ***Which of the two models – Independent or Collaborative work-based learning – does your organisation prefer?***

- 8) **MIA recommends that the *independent* work-based learning model is strongly preferred when compared with the *collaborative* model.**

---

<sup>1</sup> NZIER. 2023. [Workforce in Red Meat and Wool: results from supplemental modelling](#). A report for Ministry for Primary Industries.

Consultation Question 2. ***Why will your preferred model work best for employers and learners in work-based learning?***

- 9) MIA considers there to be four key reasons to prefer the *independent* model to the *collaborative* model, as outlined below:

Quality of Pastoral Care – Providing pastoral care to employee-learners is a fundamental responsibility of employers, while educators may play an important role in aspects of pastoral care directly related to learning.

In the meat industry, training and proficiency assessment are typically conducted by colleagues in the workplace. In this setting, pastoral care related to learning is best provided by those with an established relationship with the employee-learner and who are knowledgeable about the technical material and working context.

MIA does not consider that pastoral care delivered by ISB staff, who are distant from and unfamiliar with the learners, would offer the same level of value.

Efficiency – MIA considers that under the *independent* model, both the employer and the ITPs/PTEs have strong incentives to collaborate to deliver pastoral care to the extent it is required, how and where it is required.

However, regarding the *collaborative* model, MIA is concerned that placing responsibility for pastoral care for employee-learners in quasi-autonomous government organisations (ISBs) is likely to decouple the delivery of pastoral care from any meaningful assessment of the need for it.

In so doing, MIA is concerned this may create a situation where ISBs seek to provide pastoral care where it is not wanted or needed, impairing relationships and undermining the reputation of the ISBs in the eyes of the industries involved.

Connectedness – the development of strong relationships between the employer, education provider and the employee-learner is important. Adding a fourth party (i.e. the ISB) into this ecosystem of relationships may make building and maintaining relationships among the parties more challenging, leading to confusion and uncertainty regarding roles and responsibilities.

Practical limitations – meat processing is factory-based work, predominantly occurring in rural and provincial locations and where employee-learners often have very low levels of educational attainment. MIA does not consider any of the channels presented in the consultation document (i.e.... *field staff to a comprehensive contact centre and online support*) for how ISBs would provide pastoral care, in this context, practically achievable or desirable.

Consultation Question 3. ***What does your organisation think are the main benefits, costs and risks of each option for employers and learners in your industry?***

- 10) MIA considers much of its answer to question 2 (above) to be relevant for question 3. MIA also observes that the collaborative model is more complex than the independent model – adding complexity without compelling justification is undesirable.

- 11) Two further risks associated with the *collaborative* model option are of concern to the MIA. Each is a potential consequence of the reduction in the total resources available for ITPs and PTEs if a 'top-slice' of TEC-allocated learner funding is taken and redirected into ISBs to perform pastoral care.
- 12) First, caution needs to be exercised in redesigning funding settings that may impact the future financial viability of ITPs and PTEs, where resourcing for pastoral care also contributes towards fixed operating costs.
- 13) Second, some meat processing companies can significantly increase staff enrolment in formal training because a portion of TEC-allocated learner funding is passed to employers. This fairly recognises their role in delivering training and assessment, and in providing pastoral care as employees work toward formal qualifications. Reducing the funds available to ITPs/PTEs could undermine this system, potentially leading to fewer enrolments.

Consultation Question 4. ***Both models will involve a transition process but this will be different for each. What will be the critical factors in making transitions work for your industry?***

- 14) MIA has struggled to discern meaningful distinction between the two proposed models with respect to transition but notes that the description of transition for the *independent* model includes the following:

*'Through this process, an employer, apprentice, and trainee engaged with a Te Pūkenga division would maintain that relationship. Apprenticeships and traineeships with a private provider would not be affected by introducing this model.'*

This appears to be the least disruptive of the two models for learners, which is desirable.

- 15) During the transition process and irrespective of the prevailing model, it is of paramount importance that adequate resources are allocated to satisfactorily protecting intellectual property.

Over many years, the red meat industry has made substantial investments into the development of unit standards, learning guides and other training resources. MIA looks forward to engaging with the Tertiary Education Commission on how these assets will be treated, and industry historic contributions recognised, as the redesign of the vocational education and training progresses during 2025.

## **MIA Contact**

Chris Houston  
Principal Policy Analyst  
Meat Industry Association of New Zealand (Inc)

chris.houston@mia.co.nz

21 February 2025

## Appendix 1

### MIA members and affiliate members as at 17 February 2025

Members	
Advance Marketing Limited Exporter Membership	Waimarie Meats Partnership
AFFCO NZ Ltd - Membership Levy	Wallace Group LP
Alliance Group Limited	Wilbur Ellis NZ Ltd
Ample Group Limited	Wilmar Trading (Australia) Pty Ltd
ANZCO Foods Ltd	
Ashburton Meat Processors Limited	
Auckland Meat Processors	Affiliate Members
Bakels Edible Oils (NZ) Ltd	Abattoirs Association of NZ
Ballande NZ Ltd	AgResearch
Black Origin Meat Processors	Alfa Laval New Zealand Ltd
Blue Sky Meats (NZ) Limited	Americold NZ Ltd
Columbia Exports Ltd	Aon New Zealand Ltd
Crusader Meats	AsureQuality NZ Ltd
Davmet NZ Limited	AusPac Ingredients NZ Ltd
Fern Ridge Ltd	Beca Ltd
Firstlight Foods Limited	Centreport Wellington
Garra International Limited	CMA CGM Group Agencies (NZ) Ltd
GrainCorp Commodity Management	CoolTranz 2014 Ltd
Greenlea Premier Meats	G-Tech Separation - Bellmor Engineering
Harrier Exports Ltd	Global Life Sciences Solutions New Zealand
Intergrated Foods Consortium	Haarslev Industries New Zealand
Kintyre Meats Ltd	Hapag-Lloyd (New Zealand) Ltd
Lean Meats Oamaru	IBEX Industries Limited
Lowe Corporation Ltd	Intralox LLC
Mathias NZ Limited	Kemin Industries Ltd
Ovation NZ Ltd	Liquistore
Peak Commodities Limited	Maersk A/S
Prime Range Meats	MJI Universal Pte Ltd
Progressive Meats Limited	Oceanic Navigation Ltd
PVL Proteins Ltd	Port of Napier
SBT Marketing (2009) Ltd	Port of Otago Ltd
Silver Fern Farms Ltd	Pyramid Trucking Ltd
Standard Commodities NZ Limited	Rendertech
Taylor Preston Limited	SCL Products Limited
Te Kuiti Meat Processors Limited	Scott Technology Ltd
UBP Limited	Sealed Air - Cryovac
Value Proteins Ltd	Suncorp New Zealand Services Limited