

6 October 2015

Research Director  
Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

(Submission by e-mail: [etsbc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:etsbc@parliament.qld.gov.au))

Dear Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission on the *Jobs Queensland Bill 2015* to the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee, on behalf of the members of the Australian Sugar Milling Council (ASMC).

The objective of the Bill is to establish Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory entity to provide strategic industry-led advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce development and planning, with a focus on making the Queensland vocational education and training (VET) sector the strongest and most productive in Australia.

For industry and employers, the new entity will:

- provide the opportunity to inform government of the strategic skills they need to grow their business in the medium to long term;
- reinstate the independent voice of industry on skills in Queensland; and
- assist with the development of medium to long term workforce planning.

For the community and workforce, including apprentices and trainees, the new entity will:

- help support future employment opportunities;
- ensure skills better align to the job needs of the future; and
- help develop a workforce capable of supporting sustainable economic growth across Queensland.

The Australian Sugar Milling Council (ASMC) is the peak policy body for Australian sugar milling companies, representing over 95% of Australian raw sugar production. This submission is supported by ASMC's six member companies:

- MSF Sugar
- Isis Central Sugar Mill Company

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- Bundaberg Sugar
- Wilmar Sugar
- Mackay Sugar
- Tully Sugar

For more industry overview see <http://asmc.com.au/industry-overview/>

Our members provide substantial seasonal and year round employment, in Regional Queensland locations. These regions have some of the highest unemployment rates in Queensland and therefore jobs in the local community is an important issue to the management and workforce of these organisations.

**Unemployment Rates by Labour Force Region, July 2015 (15+) (%)**

<b>Labour Force Region</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
Sunshine Coast	6.1
Mackay	6.3
Fitzroy	7.4
Cairns	8.9
Wide Bay	9.2
Townsville	9.4

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey, three month average original data.

The Sugar Milling sector puts significant resources into attracting, recruiting and training it's workers to safely perform in a high risk and time sensitive globally competitive business environment. The fact that sugarcane is a perishable product and needs to be harvested at a specific time of the year means there is an seasonal peak in jobs required to complete a successful annual harvest and processing of the crop.

Members work independently and collectively to support skills and jobs growth in a range of traditional trades as well as sugar manufacturing specific roles. In addition to substantial company specific activity, the industry resources a number of activities such as:-



- Maintain, review and update the Sugar Milling Certificate and associated skill sets;
- Planning to make application to have the certificate III in Sugar Milling declared as an Australian Apprenticeship. This would give our new recruits an alternative apprenticeship pathway into the industry equivalent to the alternate trade apprenticeships already available. This in turn would potentially attract more applications to the Sugar Industry under another designated formal apprenticeship pathway.
- Through industry funded vehicles deliver operational and supervisory level training solutions to new and returning workers.

The key element missing is in the aspect of workforce planning and trying to predict skill set requirements over future years. Sugar manufacturing is affected by climatic conditions, including cyclones, floods and drought. The affect of these events can cause wide variations from year to year in the size of the crop for processing and so planning long term job requirements and seasonal fluctuations can be more difficult than many other industries.

It is for these reasons that the ASMC are generally supportive of the Jobs Queensland Bill and would be very keen to assist in guiding the future agenda of this initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission in relation to the Bill. Should you have any further questions or wish to discuss the content of this submission further, please contact Garry Whiting on 07 3231 5000 or at [asmc@asmc.com.au](mailto:asmc@asmc.com.au).

Yours sincerely

Dominic V Nolan  
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