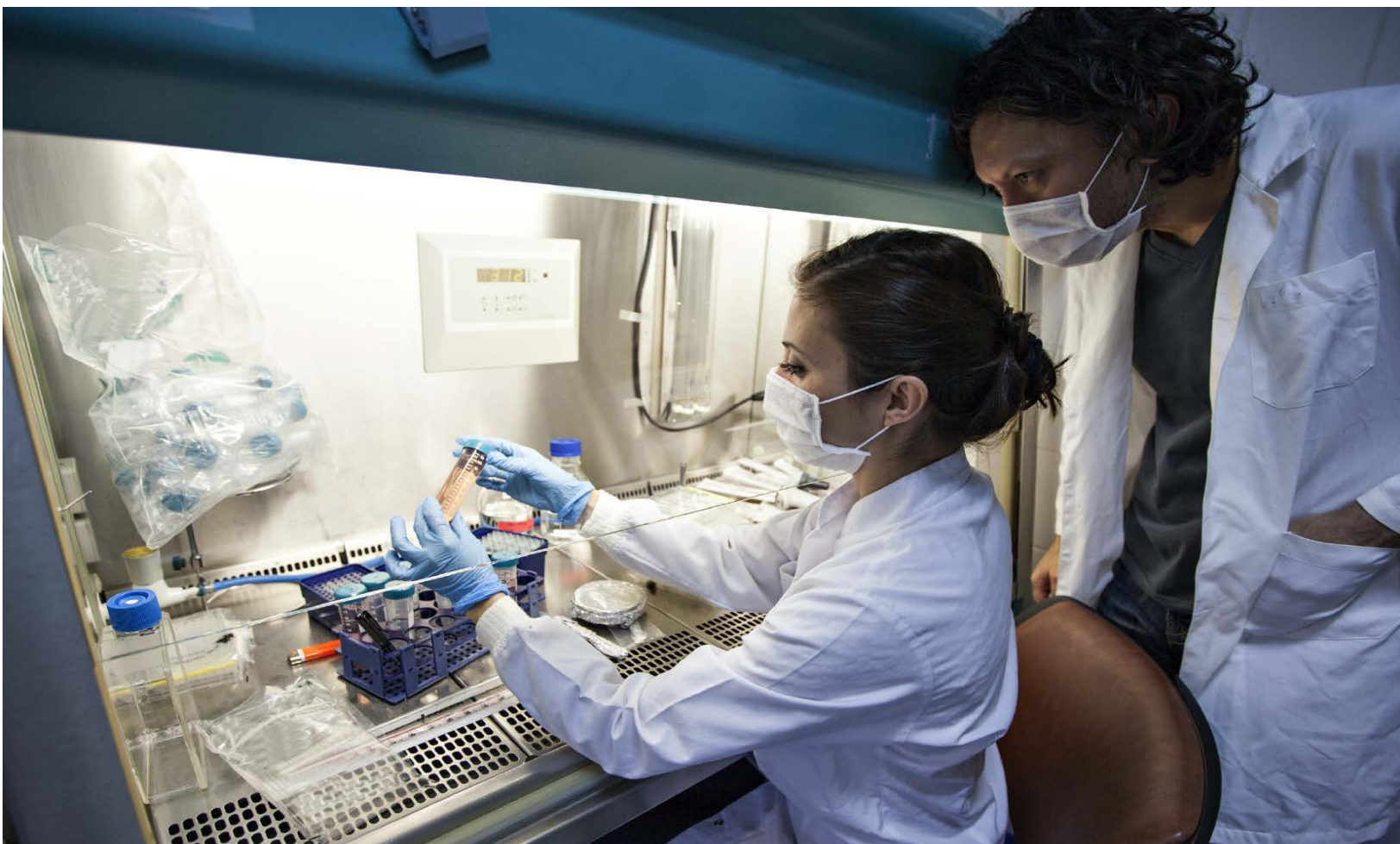


# Process Manufacturing, Recreational Vehicle and Laboratory Industry Reference Committee

Point of Care Testing  
2019 Case for Change



## Administrative Information

### **Name of Industry Reference Committee (IRC):**

Process Manufacturing, Recreational Vehicle and Laboratory (PMRVL)

### **Name of Skills Service Organisation (SSO):**

Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA Manufacturing)

## About the Industry Reference Committee

The Process Manufacturing, Recreational Vehicle and Laboratory Industry Reference Committee comprises eight members and was constituted in May 2017.

The 2019 Case for Change was reviewed and approved by the membership below:

Mr Keith Monaghan (Chair)

Ms Julie Warren

Mr Ian Curry

Mr Nigel Haywood

Mr Stuart Lamont

Mr Han Michel

Ms Leah Simmons

Mr Grahame Aston

## About this Case for Change

This Point of Care Testing Case for Change will be included in the 2019 Process Manufacturing, Recreational Vehicle and Laboratory Industry Skills Forecast and Proposed Schedule of Work.

## Industry Reference Committee Signoff

This 2019 Point of Care Testing Case for Change was agreed as the result of a properly constituted IRC decision and was approved by:

**IRC Chair:** Keith Monaghan

**Date:** February 2019

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This 2019 Point of Care Testing Case for Change has been prepared on behalf of the Process Manufacturing, Recreational Vehicle and Laboratory Industry Reference Committee for submission to the Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC).

This document has been produced with the assistance of funding provided by the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Education and Training.

## Point of Care Testing

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### Process Manufacturing, Recreational Vehicles and Laboratory IRC

#### MSL Laboratory Operations Training Package

**Contact details:** Mr Keith Monaghan (Chair)

**Date submitted to Department of Education and Training:** February 2019

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#### *Description*

The project will develop a Point of Care Testing (POCT) Skill Set to meet increased demand in this area and to provide Pathology and other workers an opportunity to gain the skills required to provide accurate and timely test results.

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#### *Rationale*

Testing of pathology samples has traditionally been a multi-step process as samples were required to be sent to a laboratory for testing before a clinician could access results. This process is time consuming and can delay diagnosis, prevention and treatment of disease. The development of Point of Care (POC) technology has allowed some pathology testing to be performed at the time of the consultation i.e. 'the point of care'. A properly trained Point of Care Testing (POCT) operator could perform a test and access results that can be used to make immediate informed decisions about individual care.

The volume of POCT has been steadily increasing since its introduction over 40 years ago. NSW Health Pathology manages the world's largest accredited POCT service, with over 35,000 staff informally trained in POCT, operating over 500 devices in more than 180 metropolitan, regional and rural hospital locations. New devices are emerging rapidly, with NSW Health Pathology predicting the number of devices will increase to around 15,000 in five years.

POCT ultimately improves the safety of patients and supports patient-centred healthcare, as more patients have access to quality, reliable pathology tests; that means faster pathology results and receiving treatment faster. It also means patients who need critical care are identified more quickly and transported to larger hospitals to receive lifesaving treatments.

Alternatively, patients who might have had to travel for pathology tests in the past, especially in rural and remote settings, can now stay where they are and reduce the time away from their home and families.

Other drivers include:

- budget pressure to reduce hospital length of stay and to avoid unnecessary transportation costs
  - opportunities for care optimisation that include accident scene testing, monitoring effects of therapies and screening prior to imaging or operative procedures
  - remote management of patients
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- the need for innovative solutions to manage patients with chronic disease safely at home and ease the burden on overflowing hospitals and an aging population
- opportunities to redesign laboratory service models around POCT to help overcome workforce shortages for technicians.

Feedback from industry suggests many of the skills required for POCT are already covered in the MSL Laboratory Operations Training Package. For example, basic understanding of the process of testing, and understanding of quality systems. The MSL Training Package was last reviewed and updated in 2018.

The 2018 MSL Laboratory Operations Industry Skills Forecast identified the need for further investigation for new training package products in POCT. In the last 12 months, IRC members, SSO representatives and key industry stakeholders have worked assiduously and there is now strong support for a new unit and skill set to be developed.

### *Impact of Change*

The development of a point of care skill set would be welcomed by employers in the pathology sector. Employees would be able to learn new skills, which prepare them for trends currently sweeping the industry, and which are only predicted (by NSW Health Pathology, amongst other large users of pathology services) to increase.

The skill set would not impact negatively on students or RTOs; it would provide an alternative educational offering for workers, initially in the pathology sector looking to upgrade their skills, and allow RTOs delivering training for the pathology sector to better meet employer requirements.

No other training packages would be impacted.

There is one 'POC' accredited course, developed by the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM); 10144NAT – Course in HIV Point of Care Testing, which is accredited by ASQA. It is due to expire at the end of 2020.

According to the Department of Health, in 2016, there were 1,007 pathologists employed in Australia, of whom 34.5% worked in New South Wales.<sup>1</sup> The POCT skill set would allow other medical practitioners, e.g. nurses, general practitioners and clinicians, to perform testing onsite during consultations and reduce the reliance on more costly and time consuming laboratory based pathology tests.

The proposed unit and skill set could have broad application across a number of job roles. In the MSL Laboratory Operations Training Package, the new components would be relevant for those undertaking a Certificate III in Laboratory Skills or a Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques wanting to work in

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health, 2016, Pathology Factsheet  
<http://hwd.health.gov.au/webapi/customer/documents/factsheets/2016/Pathology.pdf>

pathology testing. In the HLT Health Training Package, those undertaking Certificate III in Pathology Collection are also a key target.

There are two potential risks that will arise if the skill set is not developed. Firstly, Australians will not have access to the enhancements in pathology services that POCT provides; put simply, in some cases, serious diseases may go untreated or treatment may be delayed as a result. The second risk flows from the first, if the formal VET system cannot provide the POCT skills required, different organisations will continue to develop their own training, with no national consistency.

### *Industry Support for Change*

The need for POCT has been raised by the industry previously and was included in last year's Industry Skills Forecast as a Training Product Review Priority, but more work and time was needed to clarify how best to provide the skills required. It has now been agreed by industry that a skill set would be beneficial.

Industry consultation and engagement has been extensive and extremely supportive. As a leader in this area, NSW Health Pathology has been heavily involved, especially the Strategic Leadership Team, who are strong advocates for developing national training standards. Meetings have been held with the following NSW Health Pathology staff: Acting Chief Medical Scientist and Executive Director of Clinical Operations, Executive Director of Clinical Services, Executive Director of People and Safety, Director of Point of Care and the POCT Training Coordinator.

The Worldwide Organisationally Placed POCT Assembly (WOPPA), which includes representation from state/territory health departments across Australia, has been notified of this work and have shown great interest in the potential for training package development. Results of a survey circulated to WOPPA stakeholders in late 2018 further support this notion.

### *Consultation Plan*

In preparing this case for change IBSA has conducted fit for purpose consultation appropriate to the scope of the project. Further industry assessment to validate skills required will be undertaken with a broad cross sector of industry stakeholders as part of the project. IBSA will consult closely with the project IRC and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and engage with key stakeholders across the laboratory, pathology and health industries.

The IBSA Manufacturing training development methodology follows the Training Development and Endorsement Process Policy and uses a five-phase methodology. IBSA Manufacturing will coordinate the project and work with the IRC.

#### **Phase 1 – Initial research and analysis**

Establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to validate the project scope and plan, to contribute to further industry assessment and assist in determining industry needs and job role functional analysis.



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The IRC will appoint a TAC, with the current skills and knowledge across a broad range of industry job roles, to inform this work.

Proposed membership will include, but not be limited to, representatives from:

- representative/s from the WOPPA network
- a Government Health Department representative
- RTO representative/s
- Other technical representatives as needed by the IRC.

Further industry assessment will determine the specific skills to be included in the skill set. Due to the cross industry focus of the proposed skill set stakeholders from across the laboratory and health sectors will be consulted, including the Technicians Support Services Industry Reference Committee.

The proposed POCT skill set will be developed under the direction of the TAC and then reviewed by the IRC at each phase.

#### **Phase 2 – Round 1 public consultation**

The first draft of training package components will be developed by the TAC and then the laboratory operations industry and RTOs.

#### **Phase 3 – Round 2 public consultation**

Respond to feedback and develop second draft of training package components. Feedback to be sought from the broader laboratory operations industry and RTOs.

#### **Phase 4 – Approval process**

Adjust training package components in response to further feedback and seek approval from respective committees, namely the TAC and IRC, and endorsement from state training authorities.

#### **Phase 5 – Submission to Department-AISC**

Submit to the Department of Education and Training for AISC approval.

#### **Consultation plan**

IBSA will create a project webpage to provide project updates, gather feedback from stakeholders and validate training package components.

Proposed consultations include, but are not limited to:

- the state/territory health departments
- the WOPPA network
- current users of POCT devices
- other key stakeholders identified by the Process Manufacturing, Recreational Vehicle and Laboratory IRC.

*Ministers’  
Priorities  
Addressed*

This Case for Change meets the following Ministerial priorities

- **More information about industry’s expectations of training delivery is available to training providers to improve their delivery and to consumers to enable more informed choices**

A primary driver of all training package work is that the product reflects contemporary work organisation and job profiles, while incorporating a future orientation. In the pathology sector, the volume of POCT has been steadily increasing, with new devices emerging rapidly. The POCT skill set provides an alternative educational offering for learners in the pathology sector, looking to upgrade their skills. By delivering this skill set, training providers will be able to improve their delivery to consumers by better meeting employer requirements. Due to clinical demand, if the formal VET system cannot provide the POCT skills required, it is likely that different organisations will develop their own training with a consequent loss of national consistency and the potential for errors to occur.

- **Foster greater recognition of skill sets.**

Skill sets meet identified niche industry or business needs. Creation of the POCT skill set is a formal recognition of a learner’s POCT skills within the national training system; accessible to a range of VET learners and an agile response to industry needs. As mentioned above, this skill set would allow other medical practitioners to perform testing onsite during consultations and reduce the reliance on costlier and more time consuming pathology tests.

*Potential  
Outcomes*

The purpose of POCT is to provide accurate and timely test results that effectively contribute to immediate management decisions. Currently operator training for POCT devices is usually done ‘in house’, but this is somewhat unsustainable considering the projected demand. The development of national training package products for POCT will ensure workers are readily able to access quality training, in turn able to be more responsive, and provide a better service, to clients.

In the future, and as this technology becomes more widely used, there is the potential for a greater number of people to be trained in the use of POCT devices such as those working in the hospital networks (to allow critical testing to be performed at the bedside or in a clinic), specialist medical retrieval medicine, General Practitioner (GP) practices, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical services, specialist community health services, and in other situations or community settings, such as pharmacies, sporting venues and law enforcement. The ability to successfully pursue these opportunities will be underpinned by the right training for POCT clinicians.

Project Scope

*Training  
Package*

MSL Laboratory Operations Training Package

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*Timing*

**Estimated Project Duration:** 12 months

If approved, the project would be undertaken in stages.

**Anticipated Start Date:** July 2019

**Anticipated Completion Date:** Case for Endorsement to be submitted June 2020

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*Qualifications*

No qualifications are impacted by this project

The new unit will likely be a listed elective in Certificate III in Laboratory Skills and/or Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques

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*Skill Sets*

A total of **1 Skill Set** will be developed/update as part of this project.

**1 new** skill set to be developed:

*Point of care testing skill set*

The new skill set would include the proposed new unit and consider existing units in the following areas:

- Quality assurance
- Interpreting results
- Infection control
- Healthy bodies
- Customer service
- Work health and safety.

Relevant units, including those in the HLT Health Training Package, will be reviewed for relevance and inclusion in the Skill Set.

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*Units of Competency*

A total of **1 unit of competency** to be developed as part of this project.

**1 new** units of competency to be developed:

*Perform Point of Care Tests*

IBSA will work with relevant Industry Reference Committees to ensure this unit does not duplicate existing Training Package content.

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Detail on training components proposed for work for 2019-20.

| Qualification / unit / Skillset | Code and Title                         | Previous change (endorsement date) | Previous work (transition / update / establishment) | Work (new / update / deletion) | Entry level / trade / post-trade qualification | Expected date for endorsement |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Skillset                        | [CODE TBC] Point of Care Testing       | N/A                                | N/A   | New                            | Entry level / Trade                            | June-2020                     |
| Unit                            | [CODE TBC] Perform Point of Care Tests | N/A                                | N/A   | New                            | Entry level / Trade                            | June-2020                     |