

PRESS STATEMENT - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - 18th May 2011

Skills Active Aotearoa believes that it has been misrepresented by the Tertiary Education Commission's media statement regarding repayments made by ITOs, which misleadingly implied that all named ITOs had deliberately claimed funding they were ineligible for.

Skills Active Aotearoa was asked to pay back \$18,000 to TEC because three of its trainees, in the sample chosen, were from workplaces which were unable to provide trainee records due to having closed or changed hands. The inability to contact three out of two hundred workplaces sampled is not unexpected considering the audit was being carried out over twelve months from the enrolment of the trainee sample and New Zealand's workplaces had been affected by a global recession.

Skills Active CE Grant Davidson said all three of the trainees have been recognised by TEC as having valid trainee agreements signed by the trainee and their workplaces.

"There is no evidence that the three trainees were ineligible to receive funding. Skills Active has voluntarily given back this funding without prejudice in order to finalise a protracted audit process, but we still strongly dispute TEC's audit methodology," says Skills Active CE Grant Davidson.

Skills Active received total TEC funding of close to \$5.2M for over 6300 trainees in 2009.

"During the audit, TEC in fact found that Skills Active had enrolled and supported more trainees than funded for," said Grant Davidson.

Skills Active Aotearoa is the industry training organisation for the sport, fitness and recreation sector. "We are committed to high levels of accountability and performance. As such we welcomed the audit process as a way to validate our systems and provide feedback to make them more robust," said Grant Davidson.

Skills Active continues to offer valued on-job qualifications to our industry sectors and strives to ensure its processes are robust so that public money is used efficiently and with integrity at all times.