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May 2026

Candidate briefing

INDUSTRY SKILLS AUSTRALIA

Chief Operating Officer

Role

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About the organisation

Industry Skills Australia (ISA) is the Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) for Australia's transport supply chain sectors. Its remit spans transport and logistics, rail, aviation and maritime, and emerging areas including omnichannel logistics and distribution and space transport and logistics.

ISA operates at the intersection of employers, unions, governments and the vocational education and training (VET) system. ISA's mandate is to translate industry-driven workforce intelligence into practical advice, policy input and workforce development solutions that inform Commonwealth decision-making and public investment in skills.

History and evolution

ISA has operated for more than two decades supporting Australia's transport and supply chain industries. The organisation was previously known as Australian Industry Standards (AIS) and rebranded to Industry Skills Australia (ISA) as it transitioned into the Jobs and Skills Council model. ISA was formally appointed by the Australian Government in June 2023 to establish the Jobs and Skills Council for the nation's transport and logistics (road, rail, aviation and maritime), omnichannel logistics and space transport sectors.

From 2016 to 2022, AIS operated as a Skills Service Organisation (SSO), providing technical and secretariat support to Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) that directed training package development and review. From January 2023, the Australian Government replaced the SSO/IRC model with a national network of 10 industry-owned Jobs and Skills Councils, supported by an investment of \$402 million over four years.

Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs)

Jobs and Skills Councils bring together employers, unions and governments to set workforce and skills priorities for their sectors and strengthen industry voice in the VET system. Each JSC works with Jobs and Skills Australia, drawing on national workforce analysis and projections.

Within this framework, JSCs have four core functions:

- Industry stewardship – gather industry intelligence and represent industry views to government and VET decision-makers.
- Workforce planning – identify current and emerging skills needs and develop national workforce plans.
- Training product development – develop and improve VET training products to meet industry needs.
- Implementation, promotion and monitoring – support delivery, promote pathways and monitor training outcomes.

Sector and industry context

ISA operates in sectors that are fundamental to Australia’s economic resilience, national connectivity and supply chain continuity. Transport and logistics activities underpin the movement of people, goods, food, fuel and critical materials across a geographically large and complex economy, making workforce capability in these sectors strategically important.

Organisational mandate

ISA provides advice to government and the national skills system. It turns sector intelligence into workforce planning priorities, training product development and targeted implementation activity across transport supply chain sectors.

The organisation operates within a regulated and contract-based environment, with defined deliverables tied to government priorities. Its effectiveness depends on strong industry relationships, credible insight, disciplined execution and the ability to balance policy engagement with practical, outcome-focused work for industry stakeholders.

Evolution and strategic direction

ISA is entering an important phase of organisational evolution. The operating environment for Jobs and Skills Councils has become more complex, with heightened expectations around performance, governance, delivery discipline and quality of advice.

ISA is strengthening its executive capacity to lift performance and delivery. Priorities include deeper industry connectivity and higher-quality advice to government.

This includes an increased emphasis on industry credibility, operational effectiveness, cross-sector coordination and the ability to translate strategy into measurable outcomes.

Context and operating environment

ISA operates nationally and engages a diverse stakeholder set including employers, industry bodies, unions, education providers and government agencies. Delivering effectively in this environment requires strong sector knowledge, systems thinking and disciplined execution.

The organisation operates within a defined funding horizon common to the JSC model, in a system that has existed in various forms for more than two decades. Performance, delivery and trusted relationships underpin ISA's standing with government and industry.

Why these roles are being appointed

ISA is refreshing its executive leadership structure to support the next phase of organisational performance and impact. This reflects the strategic direction and ambition to strengthen stakeholder confidence and organisational effectiveness.

The five roles will form the executive team reporting to the CEO. The team is expected to bring deep industry experience, strong stakeholder engagement capability and a track record of delivery in a policy-informed environment. The appointments strengthen ISA's capacity to serve industry and advise government.

For **specific role details**, please see the position description included.

Remuneration

The successful candidate will be offered a competitive Total Remuneration Package (TRP) broadly aligned with Victorian public sector executive levels SES 1–2, anticipated to be in the low \$200,000s to early \$300,000s TRP, inclusive of statutory superannuation (currently 12%). The final offer will be determined based on the appointee's skills, experience, and current remuneration, and will be commensurate with senior executive remuneration in comparable, complex and diverse organisations.

Professional development and external engagement opportunities will be agreed in line with organisational policies and, where appropriate, approved by the CEO. Such opportunities are generally supported to enable effective performance in the role.

Position Title: Chief Operating Officer

Reports to: CEO

Direct Reports: 6

About Industry Skills Australia

Industry Skills Australia (ISA) is a Jobs and Skills Council (JSC) operating within a government-funded framework to build workforce capability, support increased productivity and the nation's economic growth. ISA is the JSC for the nation's Transport Supply Chain Industries, comprising Aviation, Maritime, Rail, Transport and Logistics sectors, and the emerging sectors of Space Transport and Logistics, and Omnichannel Logistics and Distribution.

ISA plays a critical role in informing Commonwealth decision-making, guiding public investment and ensuring the national vocational education and training (VET) system responds to industry's current and emerging skills needs.

The organisation is industry-owned and industry led, and operates at the intersection of employers, unions, governments and the skills system, translating workforce intelligence into policy, strategy and workforce development solutions.

The Opportunity

This is a senior executive role with responsibility for enterprise performance, financial stewardship and operational delivery.

The role contributes directly to national workforce reform, government priorities and system performance, operating in a complex and high-accountability environment.

The Role

The Chief Operating Officer is accountable for delivering outcomes at scale, ensuring alignment with government expectations, funding agreements and national reform priorities.

The role operates with significant decision-making authority and influence across government, industry and the skills system.

Working closely with the CEO and executive team, the role ensures organisational performance, policy impact and system outcomes are achieved.

Key Accountabilities

Executive Leadership and Organisational Performance

- Serve as a member of the Executive Leadership Team contributing to organisational strategy and executive decision-making.
- Translate strategic priorities into operational plans and delivery frameworks.
- Drive a high-performance organisational culture focused on accountability and collaboration.
- Support the CEO in engagement with government departments, regulators, and industry stakeholders.

Financial Leadership and Oversight

- Provide executive oversight of ISA's Finance function and financial governance framework.
- Oversee annual budgeting, forecasting, and financial planning processes.
- Ensure accurate financial reporting to the CEO, Board, and government stakeholders.
- Ensure compliance with financial regulations, funding agreements, and audit requirements.

Operational Leadership

- Lead operational execution of ISA's workforce planning and Training Product Development initiatives.
- Monitor organisational performance against operational targets.
- Drive continuous improvement across systems and operational processes.

Project Management Office (PMO)

- Provide executive leadership of ISA's Project Management Office.
- Oversee prioritisation and governance of the project portfolio.
- Ensure project management methodologies are consistently applied.

Enterprise Risk Management

- Lead ISA's Enterprise Risk Management framework.
- Identify and manage strategic, operational, financial, and reputational risks.
- Ensure program evaluation processes support evidence-based decision making.

Governance and Board Reporting

- Provide high-quality reporting to the Board and relevant committees.
- Support governance compliance and board-level transparency.
- Work closely with Audit & Risk Committee to ensure effective oversight.

Delegated Financial Authority

- Responsible for organisational financial controls and expenditure oversight.
- Approve budgets, contracts, and financial commitments within board-approved limits.

Decision Making & Scope

Holds significant delegated authority over budgets, programs and strategic direction

Influences national policy and system settings through engagement with government and stakeholders

Responsible for balancing competing priorities within a complex, multi-stakeholder environment

Operates with a high degree of autonomy while aligned to CEO and organisational direction

Key Skills, Experience and Qualifications

- Demonstrated senior executive leadership experience overseeing enterprise operations within complex, government-funded and/or highly regulated environments, with a strong understanding of public sector accountability, funding frameworks and compliance obligations.
- Proven track record in financial stewardship, including budgeting, forecasting, financial reporting and funding compliance, ideally within Commonwealth-funded programs or comparable public funding environments.
- Extensive experience leading large-scale program delivery environments, including executive oversight of Project Management Offices (PMOs) and complex, multi-stream portfolios requiring disciplined governance, prioritisation and delivery assurance.
- Demonstrated capability in leading and integrating core corporate functions, including Finance, Human Resources, Risk, Governance and Support Services, to enable organisational performance and strategic delivery.
- Strong record of driving organisational performance, operational efficiency and continuous improvement, including strengthening operating models, systems, controls and delivery maturity.

- Highly developed strategic, analytical and commercial acumen, with the ability to exercise sound judgement, manage competing priorities and deliver outcomes in a complex, multi-stakeholder environment.
- Relevant tertiary qualifications in Business, Finance, Management, Public Administration or a related discipline are essential, with postgraduate qualifications (e.g. MBA or equivalent) highly regarded.
- Professional credentials such as CA or CPA are advantageous, alongside formal training or certifications in governance, risk management or program delivery methodologies (e.g. PRINCE2, MSP).

Version control

Version	Date	Approver	Edits made:
1.0	30 Mar 2025	CEO	First version.