

DRAFT POSITION DESCRIPTION **AS AT 16** **SEPT '25**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE – INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRY SKILLS BOARD (ISB)

Role title: Chief Executive, Infrastructure Industry Skills Board¹

Reports to: Chair, Establishment Advisory Group (until formal ISB Board is confirmed)

Location: preferably Wellington

Organisational Size – still to be determined but likely to be a minimum of 10 FTEs

Delegations: executive delegations will be granted by the Board.

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY SKILLS BOARDS

The creation of the ISB forms part of the reform programme formalised under the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Bill. Their core functions are set out in section [insert] of the Bill.

ISBs operate as independent statutory bodies, governed by New Zealand's public sector employment and accountability frameworks.

The purpose of the ISBs is to elevate the voice of industry in our vocational education and training system to match their needs with the potential of learners.

ABOUT THE INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRY SKILLS BOARD

The Infrastructure ISB is established to provide leadership within New Zealand's vocational education and training (VET) system for the energy and infrastructure industries. These sectors currently include civil construction, water networks, electricity supply and distribution, extractives (quarrying and mining), and reticulated gas.

From 1 January 2026, the ISB will assume legislated responsibility for developing and approving qualifications and standards in the energy and infrastructure sectors for vocational education. It will have responsibility for ensuring that vocational education is delivering the skills that the energy and infrastructure industries require in the workplace.

ROLE PURPOSE

The Chief Executive is responsible for leading the establishment, operational readiness, and ongoing delivery of all functions assigned to the ISB under its legislative mandate for both the energy and infrastructure sectors. This is both a strategic and operational role, requiring strategic oversight of the evolving skills needs of industry, system leadership, work-based learning management, comprehensive oversight across sector engagement, qualification organisational performance, and public accountability.

The role is pivotal in ensuring that from its inception, the ISB operates with credibility and effectiveness as a publicly funded body, working closely with the senior leadership of all ISBs and across the vocational system. This includes direct responsibility for managing staff, systems, financial resources, and engagement across a wide range of sector and government stakeholders.

The Chief Executive is accountable to the ISB Board for the overall performance of the organisation, including delivery against the Board's strategic priorities, achievement of key

¹ Note that the name of the ISB is expected to change to the 'Energy and Infrastructure Industry Skills Board, once confirmed by Cabinet.

performance indicators, sound financial management, compliance with statutory obligations, and the active management of organisational risk. The Chief Executive is also responsible to the Board for upholding good employer obligations, maintaining organisational culture and staff wellbeing, embedding Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitments and ensuring that all governance reporting is timely, accurate, and complete.

ABOUT THE ROLE

The Chief Executive holds full delegated authority to lead all operational, strategic, and public-facing aspects of the ISB's work.

The role has a dual focus: maintaining statutory integrity and delivering industry credibility over some critical time dimensions.

This includes the immediate task of ensuring a seamless transition from predecessor organisations (Workforce Development Council's and Te Pūkenga) to the ISB, alongside establishing the systems, frameworks, and relationships required to fulfil statutory responsibilities.

During this timeframe, the Chief Executive must balance the demands of establishing a new organisation with maintaining service continuity for employers, providers, learners, qualification developers and assessors during the transition period. Work-based learning functions that temporarily fall under the ISB must be managed and safeguarded until they transition out or until 31 December 2027, whichever is the earlier. This will require effective risk management, compliance assurance, and system development.

Once statutory functions are fully assumed, the Chief Executive is accountable for ensuring that all aspects of qualifications development, moderation, programme endorsement, workforce planning, pastoral care, and investment advice are delivered in a cost effective and efficient way.

The Chief Executive is both a system leader and as an operational resource. This includes setting strategic direction, managing financial resources prudently, leading employment relations and people management within a lean team structure, and advising the ISB Board on all governance matters.

The Chief Executive is accountable to the Board for the overall performance of the organisation, delivering against strategic priorities, operational requirements, and key performance indicators set and reviewed by the Board.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Professional Qualifications and Experience:

The role would suit a candidate with demonstrable experience leading small-to-medium-sized public or private sector entities or business units, and who aspires to make a difference to vocational education and training outcomes.

Candidates will ideally have a thorough understanding of:

- a how industry operates, its drivers, motivations, needs and operating and planning time horizons. More specifically, the interface between the vocational education and training system and its alignment with businesses forecasting of future talent demand and supply (including demographics and attrition) at the sectoral level; and
- b New Zealand vocational education and training system, including qualification development processes, standards moderation, programme endorsement, and the strategic workforce planning landscape.

Experience managing public and other funding sources, statutory obligations, and complex stakeholder relationships is essential, as is a strong understanding of obligations relating to good employer conduct, staff wellbeing, and organisational culture.

The Chief Executive must demonstrate experience in accountability reporting, compliance, and industry engagement.

Leadership Capabilities:

The Chief Executive must demonstrate clear, structured, and disciplined leadership. This includes the capacity to:

- Execute the strategic direction set in conjunction with the Board, while maintaining direct operational oversight
- Lead people effectively and with purpose within a flat organisational structure without relying on middle-management layers
- Provide staff with clarity of roles and responsibilities, and monitor performance
- Manage financial resources and funding prudently and transparently, including developing an annual budget to support the strategic direction for approval by the Board
- Provide clear, evidence-based advice to the Board
- Develop and implement policies and procedures to enhance ISB performance, comply with legal obligations, and mitigate risk
- Build trusted relationships with diverse stakeholders across industry peak bodies, education, and government
- Engage effectively with Māori and iwi partners, ensuring Te Tiriti obligations are fully embedded
- Be the voice and face of the ISB, including where appropriate publishing articles, media comment, and sector engagement
- Be innovative in the search for new more efficient modes of operating within the legislative, organisational, operational and budget constraints present

The Chief Executive will move seamlessly between public sector governance expectations and industry-led expectations and decision-making, ensuring both are balanced and reflected in all organisational activities.

Other Capabilities:

The Chief Executive should also have or be able to develop over time the capacity to:

- Navigate complex regulatory environments and legislative requirements in an environment of ambiguity and change
- Have a strong capability to collaborate and co-operate to mutual advantage, especially (but not exclusively) across ISBs
- Be a systems thinker, able to understand and analyse the relationships, patterns and interdependencies between the individual components to draw insights for industry vocational education and training
- Bring foresight to the role, the ability to join strategic insights to organisational capability and capacity needs.

Attributes and Approach:

The Chief Executive must operate with honesty, integrity, impartiality, and accountability at all times. A professional, structured, analytical, and outcome-focused approach is required, along with resilience in managing ambiguity and organisational change.

The Chief Executive:

- may be required to undertake national travel and work outside regular office hours as necessary to meet the demands of the role and maintain effective stakeholder engagement (working hours will be those required to meet Board and role expectations); and
- must meet all legal eligibility requirements under the Crown Entities Act 2004 and Education and Training Act 2020 (the preferred candidate will be subject to Police vetting and full declaration of any potential or actual conflicts of interest).