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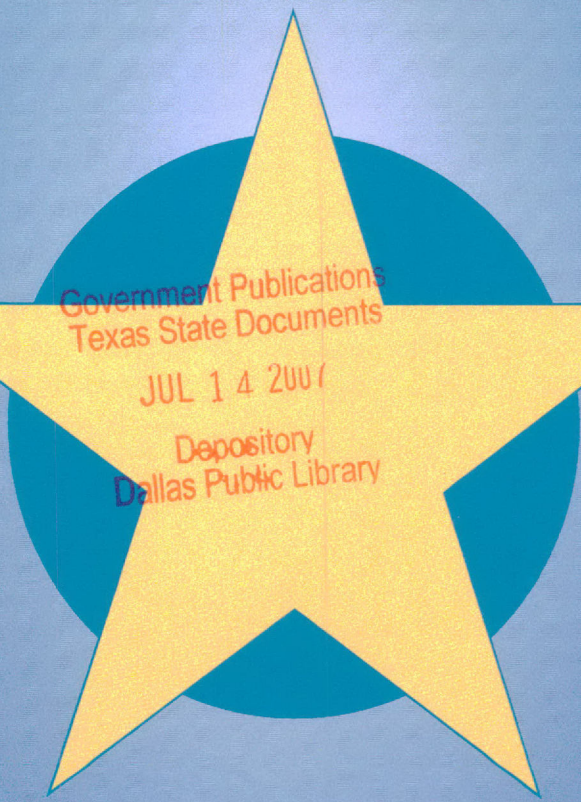
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# ANNUAL REPORT

September 2005 – August 2006

2005/6

REFERENCE



# A MESSAGE from the CHAIR

Dear Interested Party:

This Annual Report summarizes the accomplishments and ongoing initiatives of the Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB) in fiscal year (FY) 2006. You will notice that it is structured according to the TSSB's three major functional areas of work: Skill Standards Development and Recognition, Skill Standards Awareness and Usage, and Skill Attainment: Certification and Credentialing. A fourth panel describes the TSSB's challenges for the future. I hope you will find the information in these sections interesting.

In FY06, I was particularly pleased with the development of new tools and resources to assist employers and industry groups with skill standards development. *Developing Skill Standards – A User's Guide* provides a "how to" manual on the TSSB's eight-step process to develop and apply for recognition of skill standards, including samples of completed application forms. In addition, the TSSB's web section for employers and industry groups was enhanced to provide a more informative and navigable site.

Likewise, additional resources were developed for TSSB-recognized community and technical college programs. A substantial addition to the award packet for Recognized Programs is an electronic "TSSB-Recognized Program" seal and Certificate of TSSB Program Recognition, which may be used to promote the college's program status in marketing materials and on campus. These tools distinguish college programs that are meeting industry-defined standards.

These are just a few highlights of the successes noted in this report. If you have questions about any of the initiatives described within, or would like to become involved with the Texas skill standards system, please feel free to call the TSSB office at (512) 936-8100.

Sincerely,



Wayne J. Oswald



## Skill STANDARDS Development & RECOGNITION

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### Recognized new Texas skill standards

Oil and Gas Production Technician – developed by the Gulf Coast Process Technology Alliance (GCPTA), an industry-driven coalition of employers and educators of production technicians. The GCPTA was established in 1996 to establish standards for process technology education programs that meet industry's needs and to increase the availability of production technicians in the chemical and refining industries along the Gulf Coast.

The skill standards development was facilitated by the Center for the Advancement of Process Technology as part of a National Science Foundation Grant. The standards will serve as the basis of the core courses that comprise the Associate program delivered by GCPTA community college partners.

#### Developed User's Guide for Skill Standards Development

The TSSB developed a document to assist job analysts and their skill standards development teams to create skill standards that have content validity and that are in the format required for TSSB skill standards recognition. The document, titled *Developing Skill Standards – A User's Guide* (User's Guide) reflects the structure and expands on the concepts introduced in the TSSB's policy document *Guidelines for the Development, Recognition, and Usage of Skill Standards*. The User's Guide leads development teams through the eight essential steps in skill standards development, and provides samples of completed forms needed for the application.

### SYSTEM PROGRESS

#### Enhanced Employer and Industry Groups Web Section

A separate section on the TSSB's web site exclusively for employers and industry groups was enhanced and updated. Resources and tools to assist industry groups interested in developing and using skill standards were added, including introductory questions and examples to explain skill standards and their benefits. The section was also rearranged to make the information more "user friendly."

## Skill STANDARDS Awareness and USAGE

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### Restructured Texas Skill Standards Repository

The Texas Skill Standards Repository, which houses all TSSB-recognized skill standards for viewing or downloading, was restructured to make information about the standards more accessible. For each skill standard, the following information was revised to an easily readable form: facilitator of the standards development, recognition status or format, expiration date, and related college program code.

### SYSTEM PROGRESS

#### Began to Implement Targeted CTC Awareness and Usage Strategies

In FY05, the TSSB developed outreach strategies to increase the numbers of Recognized Community and Technical College (CTC) Programs in Texas. In FY06, the TSSB began to implement those strategies. Colleges with high-quality programs related to three skill standards that had no associated TSSB-Recognized Programs were identified, and technical assistance on the skill standards integration and Program Recognition process was provided to college staff.

Two of the colleges, Austin Community College and Texas State Technical College at Waco, with programs related to the Biotechnology and Biomedical and Telecommunications Maintenance Technician skill standards, respectively, invited other colleges with similar programs to participate in the technical assistance workshops. Workshops were conducted by TSSB staff with the goal to integrate skill standards into a common core curriculum. A standard, skill standards based curriculum enables employers to know that students across colleges are prepared with the same competencies.

#### Delivered Skill Standards Workshops and Presentations

Skill standards workshops or technical assistance sessions were conducted on six Texas college campuses and a skill standards presentation was delivered at the Instrumentation Education, Training, and Development Conference, sponsored by the Center for Digital and Fieldbus Technological Education. These outreach activities showed participants how to integrate skill standards into technical curriculum and explained the requirements for TSSB Program Recognition.

## Skill ATTAINMENT: Certification & CREDENTIALING

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### Recognized Three Community College Programs

The TSSB continued to recognize community and technical college (CTC) programs that integrated skill standards into their curriculum. These programs include:

Security Level 2 Certificate and Network Administration Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree Programs at Victoria College – for integrating the Cybersecurity and Network Design and Administration standards into their respective curricula. The Cybersecurity and Network Design and Administration standards were developed nationally and updated by the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies (NWCET) in Washington state.

Petrochemical Process Technology AAS Degree Program at College of the Mainland – for integrating the Chemical/ Refining Process Technician standards into its curriculum.

#### Enhanced Program Recognition Award Packet

Two resources were added to the TSSB's award packet for Recognized Programs. A TSSB-Recognized Program seal was designed for colleges' use in promotional materials such as catalogs and web sites. In addition, a Certificate of TSSB Program Recognition was developed for colleges to display in a prominent location on campus. Both of these tools allow colleges to distinguish their programs to employers from among other colleges as meeting industry-defined standards.

### SYSTEM PROGRESS

#### Developed CTC Credentialing Strategy

As one of its challenges in FY05, the TSSB indicated that it would explore the possibility of indicating on a CTC credential that an individual had graduated from a TSSB-Recognized Program. In FY06, the TSSB developed a credentialing strategy to pursue that initiative, and identified a college that agreed to pilot the strategy. With TSSB technical assistance, College of the Mainland received Program Recognition for its Petrochemical Process Technology Program, as indicated above, and will provide credentials with a TSSB-Recognized seal for its spring 2007 graduating class.

## Challenges for the FUTURE

### RECOGNITION AND MAINTENANCE OF SKILL STANDARDS

Per its legislative mandate, the TSSB must continue to identify occupational areas with strong employment and earnings opportunities for which to facilitate development of new, or adopt existing, industry-defined skill standards. In FY07, the TSSB will update its labor market information model to identify new targets for standards development or adoption. The TSSB will also facilitate the appropriate industry groups to review and update existing skill standards in the Texas Skill Standards Repository, as they expire.

### PROMOTION OF STANDARDS TO EMPLOYERS

An ongoing challenge is to promote the use of voluntary standards and credentials among industry. In FY07 and beyond, the TSSB will investigate strategies to publicize Recognized Programs, in association with community and technical colleges, to employers as a source of qualified applicants for their jobs. As part of this effort to make employers aware of Recognized Programs, the TSSB will complete piloting of its CTC credentialing strategy to document graduates' skill attainment on a college credential.

### FACILITATION OF SKILL STANDARDS USAGE

In FY07 and beyond, the TSSB will continue to implement targeted strategies to increase the numbers of Recognized Programs that meet industry-defined standards. To promote usage of recognized standards in the Texas Skill Standards Repository, the TSSB will compile and post background information about the standards' validity and reliability, such as the job analysis method employed and the composition of the statewide industry committee that developed the standards.

### STATES AND NATIONAL SYSTEMS ALIGNMENT

In FY07 and beyond, the TSSB will seek to strengthen existing and build new relationships with other states that develop and recognize skill standards to address its third mandate to enhance the portability of skills across other states and nations.



# TSSB *ORIGIN and MISSION*

## **WHAT IS THE TSSB?**

The TSSB was established by the Texas Legislature in 1995 as an 11-member advisory board to the Governor and the Legislature.

The members, appointed by the Governor, consist of:

- ★ 7 business and industry representatives
- ★ 2 labor representatives
- ★ 1 secondary education representative
- ★ 1 postsecondary education representative

## **WHAT IS THE TSSB'S MISSION?**

The TSSB is charged with the development of a statewide system of industry-defined and industry-recognized skill standards for all major skilled, sub-baccalaureate occupations with strong employment and earnings opportunities.

## **WHAT ARE THE TSSB'S MAJOR FUNCTIONS?**

### ***Skill Standards Development and Recognition***

- ★ Convenes industry groups to develop new skill standards and validates existing, nationally-established industry standards.
- ★ Recognizes skill standards based on TSSB-established validity and reliability criteria.

### ***Skill Standards Awareness and Usage***

- ★ Promotes the use of standards and credentials.
- ★ Assists education and training providers to use skill standards in their workforce programs.

### ***Skill Attainment: Certification and Credentialing***

- ★ Facilitates the portability of skills by recognizing standards and credentials across states and nations.

This report lists the TSSB's accomplishments and progress in each of these areas in FY 2006, followed by a list of challenges for the future.

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