11th September 2014

‘Moving in the Right Direction – But Don’t Stop There’

_TDA response to Industry Minister Hon Ian Macfarlane’s overhaul of VET regulation_

TAFE Directors Australia today applauded announcements by the Federal government to remove red tape under the regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), and provide greater delegations to low risk vocational educational and training providers.

TAFE Directors (TDA) has strongly argued that the cost and burden to the nation’s TAFE Institutes of Regulation and the ‘VET Bureaucracy’ has got out of hand.

Martin Riordan, Chief Executive of TDA, said the ‘one size fits all’ approach to regulation adopted by ASQA had failed to adequately recognise that low-risk Registered Training Organisations such as TAFEs need less regulation. By changing the alignment, as the Minister has announced today, ASQA will be directed to focus its resource on weeding out those high-risk providers that are having a negative impact on quality across the VET system.

Martin Riordan said: “TDA welcomes the changes announced by the Minister today in both Regulation and the way National Training Packages will be managed.

“These are steps in the right direction - however we urge the Minister not to stop there.

“The nation’s TAFE Institutes are high performance, low-risk providers. TAFEs should receive delegation to manage their own scope of course registration and have the ability to accredit courses.”

TAFE Directors is currently reviewing the operations of ASQA, and delegations, and will report to Minister Macfarlane and the Department of Industry’s VET Reform Task Force as early as next week, on how delegations may better operate – for public and private low risk registered RTO providers.

Martin Riordan added: “Another big overhead cost for TAFE Institutes and VET providers generally has been the multiple and frequent changes or ‘churn’ to National Training Packages, documented by ASQA under the Industry Skill Councils.
“TDA supports the Minister’s announcement today that a more competitive environment may operate to fund Training Packages. We also acknowledge that industry’s frustration with the current VET system needs to be urgently addressed.”

Martin Riordan said TDA had released a Policy Position Paper, arguing that Australian VET public funding be allocated to skill sets and not restricted to the total time-based qualification based solely on Training Packages set by ISCs.

For further information:

Martin Riordan
CEO
TAFE Directors Australia

Office 02 9217 3180

Website www.tda.edu.au