MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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TAFE DIRECTORS SEEKS CLARIFICATION ON PRIME MINISTER’S WITHDRAWAL OF APPROVED $111 MILLION FUNDS ALLOCATED TO TAFE UNDER EDUCATION INVESTMENT FUND

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) is seeking urgent clarification from the Office of the Prime Minister over Labor’s policy launch announcing Federal control of TAFE and small business employment, which involves a switch of $111 million in Board-approved Education Investment Fund (EIF) grants previously designated for regional TAFEs and indigenous learning schemes.

The EIF grants to TAFE had been allocated in the 2013 Budget by then Prime Minister Julia Gillard and former Treasurer Wayne Swan, under an agreement with Independent MP Rob Oakeshott.

TDA had been assured in a recent meeting with then Tertiary Education Minister Dr Craig Emerson, that 12 EIF TAFE grants had been approved by the EIF Board, and remaining funds were available for nine of those TAFE infrastructure projects.

Dr Emerson even sang to TDA executives a Meat Loaf classic, ‘Two out of Three ain’t Bad’.

Subsequently, only three EIF grants were announced; TAFE NSW North Coast Institute for $13 million, Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE for $47 million, and Charles Darwin University trade centre for $21 million.

Under Caretaker protocols, the Department of Innovation which includes tertiary education has refused to reveal the nominated EIF-Board approved projects.

In today’s Australian Financial Review, EIF Chair, Mr Philip Clark AM is critical of the “broken promise” in switching the EIF Board-approved grants.

Martin Riordan, Chief Executive of TDA, said it was important the Prime Minister, and Higher Education Minister, Senator Hon. Kim Carr, clarify which TAFEs would be impacted by the decision to switch funding.

TDA is the peak incorporated body representing Australia’s 61 TAFE Institutes, including five dual sector universities with TAFE divisions.

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