



Media Release

National Secretariat

Sydney Institute of TAFE NSW
Turner Hall , Ultimo College
Cnr Mary Ann and Harris Streets
Ultimo NSW 2007

Ph: 02 6205 4600

Fax: 02 6205 1288

Website: www.tda.edu.au

ABN: 39 070 265 734

For immediate release 21st February 2011

SEA CHANGE IN APPRENTICESHIP CONDITIONS WELCOMED FOR THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS SEEKING SKILLED CAREERS

RESPONSE TO FEDERAL REPORT BY TAFE DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA

TAFE Directors Australia today welcomed a report calling for major streamlining of processes and funding priorities for apprenticeships in Australia. The reform to apprenticeships was made by an Expert Panel commissioned by the Federal Government to review Australia's apprenticeship system.

"A Shared Responsibility: Apprenticeships for the 21st Century" was chaired by Mr. Jim McDowell, with senior industry, academic, and trade union representation. Ms Marie Persson, a Board member of Skills Australia, and a former DET NSW Deputy Director General with responsibility for TAFE NSW, was also a member of the Panel.

The Expert Panel recommends a 'custodian' role be created to overcome problems of dispersed responsibilities for apprenticeships, and additional or alternate pathways into apprenticeships – both key recommendations to the Panel by TAFE Directors Australia. Changes are also proposed for VET-in-Schools, and quality safeguards to mentor and support apprentices.

The Expert Panel also signalled the importance of 'off-the-job training' as well as the need for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and other services that better meet the needs of the 42% of apprentices who are aged over 25.

The National Board of TDA meets in Brisbane on Friday 25th February 2011, and will consider in detail the Expert Panel report.

Martin Riordan, Chief Executive Officer, TAFE Directors Australia, said that for more than four years, TDA has campaigned for reform to Australian apprenticeships, and traineeships.

He added: "Together with the TDA submission to the Federal Budget 2011, changes proposed to skills and apprenticeships by the Expert Panel will challenge the Australian Government's reform commitment.

“Without doubt, the current narrow approach to apprenticeships has added to Australia’s skills crisis. Additionally, the number of those who do not complete their course remains a problem across many trades. The sea change in reform, now recommended by the Expert Panel, could dramatically transform this sector.”

*For further information:
Martin Riordan*

0402 090 035