MEDIA RELEASE

MACFARLANE’S VET ADVISORY BOARD SHORTSIGHTED

Sharon Bird, Shadow Minister for Vocational Education, today questioned Minister Macfarlane’s judgement in not ensuring wider representation on his new VET Advisory Board.

“Without criticising the individual appointments announced today, it is very disappointing that the Minister has failed to include any representatives from TAFE as the public provider of vocational education or any union representation.”

In Government, Labor always worked in a tripartite manner with industry, business and unions to ensure that advice received drew from a wide and varied experience,” Sharon Bird said.

“This continues a pattern by the Abbott Government and this Minister to deny the value and importance of the voices of public institutions and union representatives even though they bring decades of direct experience to the table.

“The disbanding of the Australian Workforce Productivity Agency (AWPA) which was a highly regarded tripartite body, producing valuable research and advice, was the most offensive example of this approach to the portfolio.

“If the Minister is serious about training skilled and productive workers for industry for the future, he needs to re-think the skewed make-up of his Advisory Board and make a proper effort to consult all the stakeholders in this sector,” Sharon Bird said.

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