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TAFE supports overhaul of VET student loan system

Emergency interim measures essential to stop low quality for-profit providers

Government should acknowledge role of Australia’s 57 TAFE Institutes, including our six dual sector universities with TAFEs, for our support for students

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) today expressed its strong support for the federal government announcement, overhauling the VET FEE-HELP loan system by 2017, and implementing emergency interim legislation to clean up funding to poor performing VET colleges.

The Minister for Vocational Education and Skills, the Hon Luke Hartsuyker, is to be commended for so quickly reviewing the overwhelming evidence of poor practices – all a poor picture of extraordinary public funds pouring in to private for-profit, high risk vocational education.

Martin Riordan, Chief Executive Officer of TDA called on the government last month to immediately stop VET FEE-HELP loan payments and wider VET course funding to high risk registered training organisations (RTOs).

TDA also met with Ministers ahead of the recent Commonwealth, state and territory training ministerial meeting.

“This long-awaited crackdown, including an immediate pause on loan payments to poor performing RTOs, or those suspected of securing loans with ‘phantom students’, is much needed.”

“This is a series of extraordinary emergency measures.

“TAFE agrees that special amending VET FEE-HELP legislation is warranted to protect students from 1 January 2016. We hope it will be the start of a more balanced approach in vocational education, and the start of far more prudent governance.

“The work of TAFE to maintain quality systems, genuine qualifications, full student records, its costly facilities management which has been kept open to all students – including those disadvantaged and with disabilities - should be acknowledged by Government, and we support the Minister’s efforts to clean up the rorting of VET FEE-HELP loans. “

Mr Riordan said TAFEs will be working with the new Minister to bring better clarity and quality risk
categories for funding across the vocational education system.

For further information

Martin Riordan, CEO, TAFE Directors Australia

Office 02 9217 3180; Mobile 0402 090035; Website www.tda.edu.au