



PRIME MINISTER  
CANBERRA

**MESSAGE: TAFE DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA NATIONAL  
CONVENTION 2007**

It gives me great pleasure to send my best wishes to all those attending the inaugural National Convention of TAFE Directors Australia.

TAFE Directors Australia serves an important role in providing strategic leadership in the TAFE sector, promoting the sector's contribution to Australia's economic and social development, and by providing a range of services and facilities to its member institutions. This leadership is greatly valued by the Australian Government as it seeks to address the skills needs of Australian industry, in a time when strong economic growth has increased demand for skilled labour.

The theme for this convention – 'Reframe ~ Refresh ~ Fresh Start' – speaks to the opportunities that exist for new directions in the TAFE sector. The Australian Government is committed to exploring how we as a country bring out the best in TAFE and thereby meet the needs of students and industry.

Across the education and training spectrum, the Australian Government's investment and reform agenda is geared to creating more flexible and responsive institutions. Both Andrew Robb and I have spoken about the benefits of greater autonomy in the TAFE sector consistent with strong public funding.

With initiatives in this year's Budget, we are aiming to encourage more linkages between the TAFE sector and universities. I see a future where vocational and university campuses could sit side by side, with flexibility for students to move between them to access the mix of courses and skills that they need. But state governments must also do more to unshackle the TAFE sector so it can provide the flexible and responsive solutions that employers and workers need.

This is an exciting time to be in the education and training industry. I am pleased to offer my support and best wishes to the delegates attending this convention and wish you all a successful and enjoyable event.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'John Howard'.

(John Howard)