

Media Release

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WHAT'S REALLY IN 'BUDGET 2010' FOR TAFE INSTITUTES

Now that the dust from last Tuesday's Federal Budget is settling for TAFE Institutes, the real goods lie in two gems: the Quality Skills Initiative, and a promised overhaul of the Australian apprenticeship system.

First, the Quality Skills Initiative will provide \$129.8M in performance based funding, and will be open to the top 100 largest public providers in Australia. For the first time, a Federal funding scheme will directly support Australia's 59 TAFE Institutes and their 1.7M students.

In the TDA Budget submission to Federal Treasury (February, 2010), TDA called on the Government to establish performance funding for TAFE Institutes, along the lines already provided to Australia's 38 universities.

"We are delighted the Federal Government has acted on this expert TDA advice. This incentive will motivate TAFE Institutes to aspire to even further new quality and accessible training benchmarks," said Martin Riordan, CEO, of TAFE Directors Australia.

Martin Riordan added: "This in turn will accelerate quality and accessibility for student outcomes. Performance funding is a whole new ballgame. It is especially important with Federal educational attainment targets driving higher qualifications from TAFE Institutes, and the post-Bradley tertiary environment. "

TDA has written to the Deputy Prime Minister and senior DEEWR officials seeking input to the detail on how this quality funding may apply.

The overhaul of the Australian apprenticeship system promised in the Budget Papers, and called "Smarter Apprenticeships," is long overdue.

Smarter Apprenticeships will provide two components:

- Accelerated training delivery, and
- Structural change to industry training delivery to embed competency-based training into apprenticeships.

Training providers will partner with industry to ensure quality is paramount across training modes.

TDA has consistently advocated alternate trade institutional training options and pathways, with increased responsibilities for Industry Skill Councils.

“TAFE will be seeking representation on the Government’s industry committee to be established to monitor Smarter Apprenticeships, and to support the many existing and potential students which enrol for apprenticeships through TAFE,” Martin Riordan said.

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