

TAFE DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

BUDGET 2008 - MICRO ECONOMIC REFORM SHOULD BEGIN WITH TAFE

SUBMISSION TO THE RUDD GOVERNMENT SKILLS ROADMAP, AND INNOVATION INQUIRY 2008

For immediate release

Monday 5th May 2008

Australia's education revolution could be threatened unless Budget 2008 micro economic reform investment is diverted to TAFE Institutes, to ensure TAFE takes a full role in the Government's "**Skills Road Map**" for a new industry-led national training system.

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) made the call when releasing its submission on innovation across TAFE, to the Rudd Government's Skills Road Map, and the Innovation Inquiry, commissioned by Senator the Hon. Kim Carr.

Martin Riordan, Chief Executive of TAFE Directors Australia, said the Government's Discussion Paper '*Skilling Australia for the Future*' flagged "contestability" as a new funding model for government funding of VET, and supported "providing public institutions with the flexibility to compete." (REF: p2, para 5)

Mr. Riordan said: "TAFE Institutes currently enroll some 1.4M or 80% of Australians each year for new and upskilled training. Our cost base is managed under varying state and territory jurisdictions, which is different across systems, so simply legislating overnight for change could threaten students, risk fee hikes, or could make TAFE simply uncompetitive without careful Federal review."

The TDA submission noted that TAFE business development extends to offshore training, which has become a fast-growing segment of TAFE Institutes, and student enrolments from regional countries has been growing at a compound rate of almost 40% over three years – contributing some one third of Australia's \$10B education export market.

Mr. Riordan added: "Investment over past decades has created in TAFE a unique platform for Australia remaining one of the top 10 in the OECD for lifelong learning.

"TDA advocates that the Government's three separate reviews -- the Skills Road Map, the Higher Education Review (headed by Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley) and the Senator the Hon. Kim Carr Innovation Review -- support a package of measures to lift TAFE as an equal partner for industry into the 21st century training market.

For further information: Martin Riordan, CEO TAFE Directors Australia 0402 090 035

BUDGET 2008 MEASURES – ADVOCACY FROM TAFE DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA

Submissions made to all Labor MPs and Senators, and Federal Leader of the Opposition

- I. Widen Technology Infrastructure – converting TAFE to being recognized as ***Australian e-TAFE***

 - II. Widen industry co-investment and innovation – introducing EU-style skills institute motivation for industry to invest in higher level skilling, and R&D and innovation

 - III. Widening incentives and investment toward Workforce People Development – including mature-aged skills retention, and

 - IV. Widen new Australian foreign aid spending to skills and education – with Australian AQTF qualifications to be the maxim for mutual assistance in neighbouring government participation and better facilitating people movement prompted by eco-threats from global warming.
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