TAFE SA STATUTORY AUTHORITY BILL PASSES ASSEMBLY

Another significant milestone in the State Government’s Skills for All reform of the VET system was reached today with the passage through the House of Assembly of legislation establishing TAFE SA as a single statutory authority.

Employment, Higher Education and Skills Minister, Tom Kenyon says the legislation aims to modernise governance arrangements allowing TAFE SA to operate in the more commercial and competitive environment that Skills for All will bring.

“TAFE SA will become even more responsive to market needs by providing greater commercial autonomy and accountability through a Board of Directors, as well as flexibility and independence from government processes,” Mr Kenyon said.

“The legislation establishes a separation between TAFE SA and the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

“This will allow the department to focus on driving the Skills for All reforms and make independent decisions regarding the allocation of training funds,” Mr Kenyon said.

“The legislation also means that South Australia meets an important requirement of the Commonwealth’s National Skills Reform agenda allowing students studying at Diploma level and above to access income contingent loans under the VET FEE-HELP scheme.

“Access to these loans, along with fee-free Certificate I, II and designated priority courses, will help remove the financial barriers to training currently faced by many South Australians.

“TAFE SA is highly regarded as our largest public training provider employing about 2,600 staff and offering training courses to more than 80,000 students each year,” Mr Kenyon said.

“Existing employment conditions for current TAFE SA staff will remain unchanged under the new legislation.

“As the publicly owned training provider, TAFE SA will play a vital role under Skills for All which aims to get more people into training, provide greater training options for students and lifting overall skill levels,” Mr Kenyon said.