A TAFE Directors Australia response:

- TAFE Directors Australia welcomes the Skills Australia latest discussion paper as long overdue. It is appropriate that post-Bradley, there is a focus on the contribution of the 58 TAFE institutes to achieving the Government’s targets. The discussion paper shines much needed light on skills development-the key to Australia’s prosperity.
- TDA supports the report’s focus on quality and transparency in VET provision. TDA in its Election Manifesto argued for a simpler & more effective quality assurance regulatory system.
- The Skills Australia report is also right in recognizing the constraints that are inhibiting our TAFE institutes, including inadequate funding (especially the declining state & territory contributions) and the inflexibility of Training Packages that at least at the higher levels do not adequately reflect a tertiary approach to skills development.
- TAFE institutes are now increasingly complex, spanning in their delivery, as many do, the full range of qualifications from secondary to bachelor degrees. This development has not been adequately recognized by policy makers in the past. TDA supports a review of funding levels where there is delivery of the same qualifications, especially in areas of tertiary provision for areas of skills shortage.
- TDA applauds the recognition of the challenges facing TAFE staff and supports the call for review & greater attention to the initial and ongoing professional development of VET staff.
- TDA supports the call for a revitalisation of Australia’s apprenticeship system. Poor retention rates tell the story. TDA supports the implementation of new models of apprenticeship, alongside the traditional approaches.