



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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SURVEY SHOWS UNDER-FUNDING IMPACTING TRAINING FOR CRUCIAL TRADES AT LAUNCESTON TAFE

A survey of Australian Education Union members at Launceston TAFE has revealed that a lack of federal government funding is causing cuts and waiting lists in key skilled trades areas.

In the selected survey of 37 members across the TAFE, 44% reported that courses and teaching hours had been cut in the last year and 32% said there were waiting lists for courses. Affected industry areas included electronics and engineering, mechanical manufacturing, literacy and numeracy and computing and information technology.

Respondents' priorities for additional funding for teaching and learning support were information and technical support, professional development for teachers and welfare and counselling support for students. Priorities for funding for facilities and equipment included computers and technology for students, classrooms and trade equipment.

Launceston TAFE metals teacher Andrew Frith said that fees are likely to be put up for mature age students looking to improve their trade qualifications.

"Commercial pressures on the TAFE mean that fees are increasing for courses that cater for people already working in industry," said Mr. Frith.

"That's making it harder for people looking to formalise or update their skills to make themselves more employable, which is what we need to meet Australia's skills shortage.

"There is no dispute that the Federal Government has neglected TAFE by reducing its funding every year it has been in office," said AEU Tasmania TAFE President Jon Paice.

"The Federal Government has turned its back on TAFE.

"In the lead up to the federal election, we have to ask whether we really want a TAFE system that is turning away students at the same time as employers are saying that there is a growing skills crisis?"

The AEU is campaigning for at least \$470 million in additional funding per year to increase TAFE places, improve services and reduce fees and charges.

Media opportunity

AEU Tasmania TAFE President Jon Paice and TAFE teacher Andrew Frith will be available for interview at 12:15 at the Alanvale TAFE Courtyard where Bass Federal Election candidates will be speaking at a lunchtime forum.

For further information, please contact:

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