



from the editor
Michaela Kronemann
AEU Federal Research Officer

Facing forward

The National TAFE Council Annual General Meeting was held in Fremantle in January. TAFE delegates from around Australia came together to assess the post-election environment and to determine directions and priorities for the national union in 2005 and beyond.

We continue to face an uncertain climate, with the abolition of ANTA, new funding structures, the establishment of Australian Technical Colleges, and the determined development of new parameters in Commonwealth-State relations. From July, with the Coalition Government in control of both Houses of Parliament, the real extent of their agenda is likely to become much clearer. Industrial relations will be one of the first issues they intend to address.

The National TAFE Council AGM determined two broad priorities for 2005. As part of the AEU's overall public education campaign, National TAFE Council Executive will shape a national campaign which highlights TAFE issues and seeks to work in partnership with other bodies to defend and improve public vocational education and training.

At the same time, the AGM recognised the need to ensure that the AEU continues to develop strength as an activist union. Campaigning for job security will require increased recruitment, especially of casual teachers, and the active involvement of all members.

In addition to endorsing the development of a three year public education campaign, the AEU Federal Conference, which also met in Fremantle, resolved to campaign to resist attacks on industrial rights of workers and to protect and advance the industrial rights of members.

This issue of *The Australian TAFE Teacher* addresses many of these challenges. You will find articles about the Australian Technical Colleges, about TAFE funding in the context of the new federalism, about precarious employment. Arising from a panel at the AGM are reports from four Branches and Associated Bodies about organising and activism, especially around issues of job security. There's also commentary on the Government's industrial relation's agenda and on skills shortages.

What TATT readers want

You will also find a new feature in this issue, an information round up from our Branches and Associated Bodies across Australia. This was one of the regular features that respondents to our Spring 2004 reader survey said they would like to see.

In general, the survey revealed a high level of support for *The Australian TAFE Teacher* and overwhelming support for maintaining the current form as a professional magazine. People said they were generally pleased with the design and contents and they want a full spread of articles across political and industrial, curriculum and educational issues.

There was also strong support for a focus on TAFE's role in particular industries, and stories about particular institutes or programs or teachers who were doing innovative and interesting things. So there's an invitation for you. If you have a story to tell, contact me or your local TAFE Organiser or National TAFE Council Executive member.

New production team

You'll notice some design changes in this issue too. That's because production of *The Australian TAFE Teacher* is now being done by the highly capable publications' team at the AEU Victorian Branch. Let me know what you think about the look and the content. We want to continue to make sure that *The Australian TAFE Teacher* is as exciting, relevant, readable and informative as we can possibly make it.

While excited by this new venture, it is with sadness that we have ended our link to KDC Consulting Pty Ltd, the publisher of *The Australian TAFE Teacher* since 2001. Over this time they have worked closely and well with the AEU TAFE Division. They have always shown a strong commitment to *The Australian TAFE Teacher* and to ensuring that it is the high quality national publication that our readers have judged it to be. National TAFE Council Executive has expressed appreciation to KDC for their contribution to our journal over the last four years.

Email Michaela at mkronemann@aeufederal.org.au.



Vale Michael Kingston

It is with sadness that I inform you that Michael Kingston died late last year after an illness. Michael was the Advertising Manager for *The Australian TAFE Teacher* for the last four years and will be greatly missed by all those with whom he had contact. ❖