

SUBSTANTIAL DECISIONS 2005 NATIONAL TAFE COUNCIL AGM

GARY HEDGER

1. That this 2005 AGM of the National TAFE Council send to Gary Hedger wishes for a full and rapid recovery.

FEDERAL RESEARCH OFFICER'S REPORT (Agenda Item 7)

1. That Branches and Associated Bodies be requested to forward campaign materials and specific campaign links to the AEU Federal Office for inclusion on the federal TAFE web site as appropriate.
2. That Branches and Associated Bodies be requested to seek the views of trade-based teachers about pre-apprenticeship courses and unmet demand in trade areas in 2005 and that the Federal Research Officer assist in determining the best methodology for this, including the possibility of forums or meetings.

THE AUSTRALIAN TAFE TEACHER (Agenda Item 13)

1. That Branches and Associated Bodies be requested to assist in identifying members to write articles on interesting programs and/or initiatives and on the role that TAFE plays in particular industries.
2. That the Editorial Committee be requested to consider the feasibility of initiating a letters or comments section in *The Australian TAFE Teacher* part of the AEU federal website.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM BRANCH REPORTS (Agenda Item 14)

1. That the NSW motion (below) in relation to AMES be referred to National TAFE Council Executive; the issues raised in the motion to be examined by Executive and Executive to determine whether a national meeting of delegates is necessary.

The NSW motion read as follows:

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

A national meeting of delegates with expertise in Adult Migrant English Program issues will be held concurrent with a National TAFE Council Executive meeting in 2005.

This meeting will compile material from each state and territory on the detrimental effects of tendering on the provision of the AMEP since 1998.

The material will be used to lobby the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Senator Amanda Vanstone, as soon as possible.

WORKSHOP – AFTER THE ELECTION

The Australian Education Union believes TAFE in the 21st Century is a responsive, flexible, progressive provider of vocational education and training services; being competent to contribute to the building of stronger communities, stronger businesses and a stronger economy.

The AEU reiterates its commitment to the following guiding principles in the continuing evolution of the newly emerging vocational education and training system.

- access and equity for all learners
- access and equity for teachers and employees
- freedom of association and collective bargaining
- rejection of any conditional nexus between industrial matters (eg AWAs; performance pay, etc) and public funding determinations;
- all public funding being subject to consistent accountability measures.

The immediate priorities for the AEU are to:

- campaign for access to TAFE courses for all potential students, in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those with special needs
- maintain channels for union input and representation
- ensure continuing scope for collective agreements
- develop a summary of proposed IR changes and their impact on TAFE

The longer term priorities for the AEU are to:

- ensure sustainable levels of public funding for the TAFE system
- strengthen the AEU as the pre-eminent voice for Australian TAFE teachers
- ensure the growth of the union movement
- ensure public funding reduces rather than exacerbates existing gender inequities between disciplines, organisational units and institutions.

Therefore:

1. The AEU TAFE Division opposes the trends towards increased privatisation and competition and the application of a market based perspective in education and training.

The AEU TAFE Division resolves to resist these trends and to protect and promote an inclusive, democratic, accessible and high quality publicly funded vocational education and training system by:

- supporting and promoting the interests of students and their entitlement to public education and training at a minimal cost to the student;
 - continuing to promote the community as well as individual benefits of high quality TAFE vocational education and training;
 - working to ensure that TAFE institutes are models of democratic governance, inclusive teaching, visionary and innovative leadership and decision-making;
 - supporting the achievements of a quality national system of vocational education and training, including nationally portable qualifications and articulation arrangements to higher education qualifications;
 - supporting strategies that enable TAFE and other public education systems to work cooperatively and across sectors to meet community needs;
 - promoting the professionalism of TAFE teachers, including appropriate qualifications and professional development and the need for a cooperative approach to staffing structures, levels and planning;
 - continuing to campaign for the resources required to ensure that public TAFE systems can provide access to high quality vocational education and training for all.
2. That National TAFE Council Executive develop a three year public TAFE campaign framework that includes federal, state and local strategies that are aimed at:
 - highlighting the skills shortage as a critical issue for the National Economy and the key role of TAFE in solving the skills shortage;
 - exposing the hypocrisy of the Howard Government agenda, particularly the establishment and funding of Australian Technical Colleges, which will not address the skills shortage;
 - developing wider public understanding of the importance of TAFE and the challenges faced by TAFE institutions and systems, including adequate funding and the casualisation of the workforce;

- promoting a positive public profile of the AEU TAFE Division which examines and critiques policy decisions in an objective and informed manner and, where necessary, provides credible and positive alternatives;
 - ensuring that TAFE members are actively engaged in the campaign;
 - initiating and developing alliances and networks with other stakeholders, including organisations who could provide a ‘third voice’ to assist in achieving broader levels of public understanding and support for the TAFE system;
 - ensuring that resources and structures are adequate to ensure that public TAFE systems can provide high quality vocational and second chance education and training for all.
3. That the AEU TAFE Division give priority to the development of an issues papers and lobbying strategies and seek to work jointly with other divisions of the AEU and state/territory ministers, relevant Shadow Ministers, the ACTU, the Trades and Labour Councils, and other relevant stakeholders to develop common positions on priority issues including:
- attacks on TAFE;
 - attacks on AEU and unionism generally;
 - proposed Australian Technical Colleges;
 - funding models and levels of funding;
 - continued scope for collective bargaining;
 - implications of possible corporatisation of TAFE.
4. That the NTCE develop lobbying strategies in the campaign at national, state and local levels that include:
- TAFE representation in national lobbying activities;
 - assisting the Branches and Associated Bodies in the development of state and local strategies to ensure regular briefings of both federal and state/territory politicians on TAFE issues, including membership training as required;
 - regular Federal communications with relevant Shadow Ministers, opposition parties and backbenchers and members of the government;
 - forming links with local industry and community groups.
5. That the AEU, in association with Branches and Associated Bodies, claim coverage of employees of the Australian Technical Colleges.

That the AEU, in association with Branches and Associated Bodies, develop a coverage strategy to be implemented on national and state levels in an effort to unionise the Australian Technical Colleges.

That the AEU, in association with Branches and Associated Bodies, use the setting up of the Australian Technical Colleges to highlight skills shortages and lack of funding for the TAFE sector and public education more broadly.

That Branches and Associated Bodies be encouraged to lobby their respective State Governments concerning their involvement in the Australian Technical Colleges.

That the AEU and Branches and Associated Bodies form an AEU cross sector (secondary and TAFE) Task Force to develop and implement strategies to deal with the Australian Technical Colleges.

6. That this National TAFE Council recommend to the Federal Conference the establishment of the AEU Strategic Response Group (SRG).

The SRG would further develop the AEU response to the known policy decisions of the Howard Government following from the NTC AGM and the Federal Conference.

The SRG would also engage in a program of 'scenario planning' and 'risk analysis' to consider the range of possible futures under the Howard Government and prepare timely and effective strategic responses from the AEU to future policy decision of the Federal Government.

The SRG would have cross sectoral representation and have representatives from all Branches and Associated Bodies.

The SRG would develop recommendations to Federal Executive, National TAFE Council Executive, National TAFE Council and Federal Conference and to Branches and Associated Bodies.

WORKSHOP – PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT

A critical aim of the AEU in 2005 is to increase involvement of all teachers and educators in the union. Strategies need to be implemented by all Branches and Associated Bodies to recruit new members, with particular focus on precariously employed teachers, and to increase activism of all members.

1. That the AEU reaffirm its commitment to permanent employment as the preferred mode of employment.

2. Acknowledging however that casual employment is a mode of employment in TAFE, the AEU reaffirm its commitment to the TAFE Job Security Campaign by formally recognising as top priority, that casual teachers are professionals, their professional status should include:
 - access to facilities/equipment and resources;
 - access to conditions, eg travel, leave accrual, etc and/or pay equity which provides appropriate compensation for casual work;
 - access to delivery support/mentoring;
 - full recognition of work.
3. That the AEU Federal Office act as a clearing house for the compilation and distribution of recruitment material and ideas from Branches and Associated Bodies.
4. That Branches and Associated Bodies be encouraged to adapt as part of their structures casual representation at all levels.
5. That Federal AEU establish a Casual Special Interest Group.
6. That Branches and Associated Bodies be encouraged to develop innovative recruitment and induction processes for casual teachers, this could include the use of recruitment blitzes, fairs, breakfasts, institute induction sessions, etc.
7. That Branches and Associated Bodies be encouraged to develop and implement a campaign with permanent teachers, particularly those in supervisory roles. This is to ensure that casual teachers as professionals with full access to rights and conditions that fellow unionists enjoy. This is to include supporting contract and casual members who are active and becoming active as unionists.
8. That Federal AEU develop strategies and structures specifically designed to protect and defend activists in this precarious form of employment.
9. That the AEU federal Office compile and distribute to Branches and Associated Bodies the following information from TAFE agreements and awards in each state and territory:
 - a) The definitions of 'casual', 'contract' and 'permanent' modes of employment.
 - b) Details of how casuals are remunerated including any formulae used.
 - c) Details for what work is required of casuals of the remunerated amount (i.e. only hours of teaching, marking, etc.).
 - d) Conversion processes for contract lecturers/teachers.

- e) Conversion processes for casual lecturers/teachers.
- f) Restrictions on how/how long casual/contract lecturers/teachers are employed.

That additional information be compiled on the above processes that apply in other areas, both educational and more broadly, in Australia and overseas.

10. That Branches and Associated Bodies be encouraged to recognise mentoring as legitimate work in industrial instruments in terms of both work value and workload.
11. That political lobbying for legislative change to limit casual employment to 'short term and irregular employment' be undertaken.
12. That Branches and Associated Bodies be encouraged to provide a dedicated webpage for access by casual teachers to inform them of their rights, entitlements and other resources that their union provides.
13. That NTCE consider the best way that outcomes of relevant research can be utilised by Branches and Associated Bodies in the recruitment and activism strategies in campaigns around casualisation and precarious employment.
14. Branches and Associated Bodies consider appropriate forms of Professional Development to be offered to their casual teacher members.
15. Branches and Associated Bodies be encouraged to consider the inclusion of targets or limits for levels of casual teaching in their industrial agreements.
16. That the AEU produce a series of posters in 2005 (both in hard copy and electronic format) as part of the Job Security campaign and that consideration be given to the following poster topics/ideas:
 - a) Promotion of P/T and F/T permanent work as the best option for employees and employers.
 - b) Promotion of best management practices. (What kind of manager are you?).
 - c) Promotion of why casual should be in the union (What has the union done for you?).
 - d) Highlighting of 'plight' of casual teachers and pay equity issues possibly including disadvantage in areas of superannuation, long service leave and other paid leave, wages, etc.
 - e) "Invite a new member" campaign – promotion of a campaign to encourage all existing members to invite one new member to AEU or Branches and Associated Bodies in 2005.

17. That the AEU and Branches and Associated Bodies recognise particular issues for women when devising outcomes and strategies in the Job Security campaign (for example, feminised industries, access and equity areas, leave options and conditions, superannuation gaps). The recommendations from the TAFE Women's Committee should be considered.
18. NTCE will include as a regular agenda item reports from Branches and Associated Bodies on the job security campaign with specific reference to successes and progress, which can be distributed to other Branches and Associated Bodies for utilisation in publications to members.