

## SUBSTANTIVE DECISIONS

### NATIONAL TAFE COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SATURDAY-MONDAY, 13-15 JANUARY 2007, CANBERRA

#### EDUCATION IN CORRECTIONAL SETTINGS

1. That the National TAFE Council endorses the policy on Education in Correctional Settings.

#### AMES/AMEP POLICY

1. That the National TAFE Council endorses the policy on AMES/AMEP.

2. Positions arising:

Funding should be sufficient to provide all eligible migrants with their full entitlement of tuition.

Where some eligible migrants and refugees choose not to access their full entitlements, providers should be able to transfer the excess hours to students who require additional tuition to achieve the maximum level of English provided.

Whilst the tendering system continues, the tender specifications should nominate maximum class sizes and provide funding for specialised group activities, particularly pronunciation and literacy.

That the AEU seek to persuade political parties to support this policy in the lead up to the next Federal Election.

#### ENVIRONMENT

1. That the 2007 AEU NTC AGM request State and Territory Governments provide funding for TAFE to support new and environmentally beneficial industries. This funding should provide for both development and engagement.
2. That the 2007 AEU NTC AGM recommends that all Governments allocate resources for TAFE teachers to develop environmental courses and modules and to develop innovative ideas and to engage in research and development in new and emerging technologies.

3. That the 2007 AEU NTC AGM recommends that all Industry Training Packages include environmental and sustainable energy components for immediate take up.

Further that all courses and curriculum content be reviewed to ensure environmental elements are embedded. That this issue be taken up with all political parties in the lead up to the Federal election.

### **GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TRADES AND SERVICES (GATS)**

1. GATS and other international trade agreements are increasingly undermining public education. An issue of immediate concern is a proposed new GATS discipline on licensing and qualification requirements for professions and trades.

The AEU is therefore asked to inform AEU members of this threat to public education and to lobby all major political parties, sitting Independents, State/Territory governments and local government associations to urge them to oppose any proposed international agreements which could result in the privatisation of public services such as public education.

Furthermore, an article is to be written for *The Australian TAFE Teacher/Australian Educator* about this issue.

### **DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

1. That the AEU lobbies for:
  - (1) the retention of, and where necessary the reinstatement of, a publicly funded TAFE as the preferred provider of education and training in Australia.
 

Branches and Associated Bodies lobby state and territory governments with the aim of TAFE being the preferred provider of generic public service professional development, following consultation with the relevant union.
  - (2) Governments recognising the high level of professionalism of TAFE teachers by incorporating participatory organizational structures to effectively link planning to delivery of services.
  - (3) TAFE systems being rebuilt and redeveloped to form an integrated TAFE system that facilitates access to TAFE courses and provides for both broad and general education and vocational education in a collaborative environment.
  - (4) the provision of TAFE education being at no cost to the student.

- (5) TAFE being funded to develop an enhanced role in economic and social planning with a view to improving the coordination between economic planning and training.
- (6) TAFE being funded to develop a research capacity for:
  - planning and innovation;
  - New and emerging technologies and practices; and social justice strategies to overcome disadvantage particularly rural, regional and remote disadvantage.

### **STUDENTS AND ACCESS**

1. The National TAFE Council AGM recommends that as part of the 2007 TAFE AGM election campaign there is a focus on “Enrol to Vote” for TAFE students.
2. The AEU develops a series of case studies focusing on:
  - Young student poverty
  - Drop-out of apprentices at 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years especially in the skills shortages areas
  - Young girls/women who are enduring hardship (eg childcare costs).

The media and public message to voters is “TAFE under-funding causes barriers to disadvantaged students and the working poor”.

3. The AEU runs a national forum to discuss “Affordable TAFE” with appropriate stakeholders included.
4. The AEU Federal Office develop speaking notes on the issue of skilled migration and language programs so that local activists can use them to take up the fight during the Federal Election campaign in 2007.

### **INDUSTRIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES**

1. The National TAFE Council affirms the right of all TAFE workers to individual and collective representation by their union, and to be represented by it in consultation and dispute resolution.

Furthermore, every TAFE worker has the right to collectively bargain in pursuit of Awards and Agreements without threat of dismissal or discrimination, and to take industrial action.

Branches and Associated Bodies will continue to actively campaign against the Workchoices legislation and the Skilling Australia’s Workforce Act.

2. The National TAFE Council recognises that there are alternative modes of delivery emerging, requiring regulation within Awards, Agreements and other industrial instruments.

It is recommended that during 2007 National TAFE Council Executive reviews and updates current policies on flexible, online, multimode and alternative modes of delivery. An updated policy reflecting these changes will be presented to the 2008 National TAFE Council AGM for consideration.

3. A permanent professional TAFE workforce is critical to the continued social and economic development of Australian society.

The stability of the organization, maintenance of essential corporate knowledge and continuity can only be achieved through a permanent TAFE teaching workforce. Working more closely with local industry and community cannot be undertaken successfully without permanently employed teachers.

The shortage of skilled workers and the ageing of the TAFE teaching workforce has meant that TAFE is finding it more difficult to attract teaching staff.

State and Federal governments must commit to increased and ongoing funding to ensure increased permanency in real terms of the TAFE teaching workforce - both full time and part time.

Further, State and Federal governments must address the critical shortage of TAFE teachers and commit to the development of a nationwide plan for the maintenance and renewal of the TAFE teaching workforce in the short and long term.

This means increased salaries, improved working conditions and the reducing of workload of TAFE teachers to make TAFE teaching an attractive and viable professional career path.

Branches and Associated Bodies should consider all appropriate forms of political and industrial action to achieve these goals.

4. To ensure the ongoing professionalism of TAFE teachers, the AEU and National TAFE Council will lobby to ensure the creation of a fully funded national professional TAFE body which is entrusted with the responsibility of developing the TAFE teaching profession.

The Victorian TAFE Development Centre, and the former ANTA VET Staff Development Committee may serve as models.

The purpose of the body will be to research professional development needs, and to prioritise, facilitate, and oversee the design and development of programs, products, courses, activities and practices which enhance and influence the professionalism of teachers and educational managers in TAFE.

The body will include representatives from teacher unions in each state/territory.

### **FUNDING AND RESOURCING**

1. 2007 AEU NTC AGM reasserts the importance of the need for a strong and aggressive Federal Election campaign around TAFE funding. The campaign should call for significant increases in funding to redress past cuts, meet current shortfalls and address projected increased needs for VET qualifications over the next ten years.

We recommend that the AEU builds on existing AEU policies and documents, the TAFE Futures Report and other relevant documents to produce a paper which:

- sets out principles for funding of TAFE
- analyses trends, developments, proposals and options in relation to:
  - user choice
  - contestible delivery
  - profile funding
  - vouchers
  - HECS-type schemes
  - student fees and charges
  - fee for service programs
  - commercial/trading activities
  - student support services
  - unmet demand
- identifies key needs as the basis for a funding model
- Develops a set of specific criteria for desirable recurrent and capital funding models to provide an ongoing consistent approach.

### **SKILLS/TRAINING VOUCHERS**

1. That the AEU TAFE Division record and co-ordinate data concerning the implementation of the Training Vouchers program undertaken by the Howard Government. This is in response to the requests from Federal politicians seeking feedback on Training Vouchers.

This gathering of data is the basis of research to gauge the successes and failures of the Training Vouchers program at the local and state level.

The data should be used to develop a national picture as to the effectiveness of this training initiative.

The information from this research should be used to evaluate and offer feedback to the Federal Government as to the quality and value of the current Training Vouchers program.

#### **FEDERAL ALP ATTENDANCE AT NTC AGM**

1. The National TAFE Council has welcomed the past attendance and contributions of Federal ALP members at National TAFE Council Annual General Meetings.

It is, therefore, with disappointment that this 2007 NTC AGM notes the failure of Stephen Smith or his representative to attend this Meeting.

This was the only opportunity prior to the Federal Election for the ALP to engage with TAFE teachers union representatives at a national level.

A letter containing these sentiments will be sent to the Federal ALP.