

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION UNION
DRAFT MINUTES
NATIONAL TAFE COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY-TUESDAY, 13-15 JANUARY 2008, SYDNEY

SUBSTANTIVE DECISIONS

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 2007 NTC AGM

The 2008 National TAFE Council AGM notes that the Federal Labor Government has not seen fit to provide a speaker at this peak body of the union representing TAFE education staff across Australia. This follows from a failure to provide a speaker at the 2007 AGM.

We also note that after numerous promises to unveil a TAFE policy before the Election, no such policy was ever released.

We urge the Federal Government, and the Minister, to commence working productively with the TAFE sector of the AEU, to publicly show a commitment to TAFE as the preferred provider of technical and further education, and to properly fund TAFE.

TAFE ATSIEC REPORT

That the dates and timing of future AEU NTC and ATSIEC Seminar and conference be set to avoid clashing, enabling TAFE ATSIEC to attend both the AEU ATSIEC Seminar, the NTC AGM and Conference.

TAFE ATSIEC delegates and representatives need to not only be represented at NTC but be actively involved.

WORKSHOP – FUTURE OF THE PUBLIC TAFE SYSTEM

This 2008 NTC AGM reaffirms the role of the public TAFE system as the core of the vocational education and training sector in Australia.

This AGM rejects the commercialisation of TAFE, which amongst other things, transfers the cost burden of education on to the student and asserts that TAFE's primary focus is the provision of free broad vocational education for all.

This AGM therefore calls upon all governments, State, Territory and Federal, to reaffirm their commitment to the public TAFE system by providing adequate funding as per the AEU TAFE Claim.

The AEU Branches and Associated Bodies should therefore campaign to achieve this outcome and associated demands as identified in the AEU TAFE Claim by:

1. Engaging in a coordinated lobbying campaign, commencing with the immediate lobbying of all newly elected Federal MPs, particularly Julia Gillard, the Minister for Education, the Greens and other Independents.

Other coordinated lobbying activities should include:

- lobbying all State Labor Councils, the ACTU and other relevant unions.
 - joint lobbying of all local politicians involving TAFE students, teachers and supportive industry
2. Planning for a National TAFE Day in 2008 to include activities aimed at promoting TAFE and TAFE teachers.

In order to progress the campaign, the AEU Federal Office should:

- develop a discussion paper on VET in schools with a view to clarifying the AEU's views on this matter
- produce a series of Fact Sheets highlighting key findings in the TAFE Futures report and key aspects of the AEU TAFE Claim.
- develop a checklist for immediate use to assess and evaluate whether the governments at State and Federal levels have:
 - affirmed TAFE as the provider of first choice
 - provided appropriate funding
 - abolished Australian Technical Colleges
 - placed AEU representatives on Industry Skills Councils
 - reduced the need for casualisation

Furthermore, in line with the existing AEU policy, this AGM demands the following in respect to AMES:

- a guarantee of recurrent funding to AMES and the abolition of tendering
- a lifting of the two-year-wait for social security benefits for those attending AMEP classes
- the provision of sufficient ESL education for migrants and refugees to obtain employment at the appropriate skill level and to exercise their privileges and responsibilities as citizens.
- In the case of those workers on 457 visas, that there be a provision of ESL education appropriate for their Australian workplace environment.

WORKSHOP – TAFE TEACHERS – CONTEMPORARY WORK,
QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

The AEU affirms its commitment to supporting the maintenance of the TAFE teaching profession and reaffirms its support for current AEU policy on teaching qualifications.

TAFE students come from a wide and diverse range of backgrounds, with different educational needs and expectations. TAFE teachers need to be highly qualified in terms of pedagogy and industrial experience to deliver high quality vocational education and training.

The AEU expresses serious concerns with governments that seek to undermine the professional standing and qualifications of TAFE teachers.

Increased workloads for teachers, and lack of adequate funds for TAFE, adversely affect both initial and continuing teacher education, which should be free and subject to appropriate release and replacement

Therefore, the AEU:

1. endorses the current TAFE claim for a Quality Improvement Fund for Professional Development for TAFE teachers.
2. reaffirms the decision of 2007 National TAFE Council to lobby for the creation of a fully funded professional TAFE body in collaboration with teacher unions in each state/territory.

The issue of the measurement of TAFE teachers' workload and TAFE teacher standards is to be referred to NTCE for action in 2008.

The above form the basis of an AEU campaign in 2008.