

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION UNION  
DRAFT MINUTES  
NATIONAL TAFE COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
TUESDAY-THURSDAY, 13-15 JANUARY 2009, SYDNEY

**SUBSTANTIVE DECISIONS**

1. NCVER

That the AEU continue to raise with the ACTU, the Federal Government and State and Territory Education Ministers, the need for a public education provider (TAFE) representative on the Board of NCVER.

2. INTERNATIONAL TRUST FUND

That the AEU continue to have discussions with appropriate organisations in order to facilitate the development and support of Vocational Education and Training in East Timor.

3. THE AUSTRALIAN TAFE TEACHER

That all those involved in the production of *The Australian TAFE Teacher* be commended for their work and the continuing high quality of our journal last year.

WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

4. This 2009 NTC AGM reiterates its support for the campaign action outlined in the 2008 TAFE Strategic Plan and resolutions of the 2008 AGM and Executives.

There is a need for a strong community campaign in 2009. Lobbying politicians, educating key decision makers, including other unions, and our own union members, and involving the community and students in our campaigns, are fundamental to successful outcomes. There should be three elements to this campaign:

- public awareness;
- lobbying politicians; and
- formation of alliances.

5 As part of the campaign, the following strategies should be considered at the first National TAFE Council Executive for implementation:

- The holding of a National TAFE Day to celebrate the work of TAFE and the public vocational education and training system and teachers, with invitations to local MPs to visit TAFE colleges, the use of KEEP TAFE PUBLIC and marketisation campaign materials, and the generation of local media to inform the community on the benefits and worth of TAFE and the public vocational education and training system. One of the benefits of a National TAFE Day is the ability to broaden our campaign audience by localising information and hence increasing the potential of the community to identify with the issues and become active partners in our campaign.
- Initiate discussions with student organisations, including unions, about joint campaigning activities around issues including HECS in TAFE and FeeHelp. Such activity could include a student conference and a competition for the best TAFE student production promoting public education and TAFE.
- Support for the 'Save TAFE' celebrations as being set up initially in NSW.
- The use of the very successful Victorian TAFE advertisements as a model for a series of national advertisements sponsored by the AEU. These should be worked in with community campaigns and lobbying activities, particularly in regional areas
- The continuation of lobbying of Federal MPs, including through the Caucus Public Education Group, to inform MPs and encourage them to challenge Vocational Education and Training marketisation policies. Marketisation conceals governments continuing funding failure, damaging our economy and jeopardising our future. Branches and Associated Bodies should consider the establishment of similar local CPEG groups. This lobbying should include the effects of contestability including privatisation by stealth, ethical considerations, social issues and building the capacity of the TAFE and the public vocational education and training workforce with properly trained professional permanent TAFE and public vocational education and training teachers.
- The establishment of alliances with NGOs and other organisations with interest in supporting public vocational education and training.
- The establishment of alliances with political parties and campaigning for representation on decision-making bodies.

- The organisation of a Forum to discuss issues around the marketisation and privatisation of public vocational education and training to encourage awareness, debate and campaign action amongst AEU members and the community more broadly.
  - A wide range of campaigning strategies, including electronic media, should be used to effectively convey our messages as part of a public awareness campaign. One of the messages should be “Don’t privatise TAFE – Your Right to TAFE”. All equity groups should be referred to in this campaign and the intention is to grab the public’s attention with a unique event that promotes TAFE and the public vocational education and training system for all Australians.
6. That the NTC Executive contribute to any updating of ACTU Vocational Education and Training policy.
  7. That the AEU uses the ACTU Congress to continue the campaign around public provision by distributing flyers and any other appropriate material during the Congress.
  8. The AGM encourages Branches and Associated Bodies to send delegations to the BIG Skills Conference in Sydney in March, and to consider effective ways to highlight our views on marketisation and underfunding of TAFE and public vocational education and training during this event.
  9. The National TAFE Council Executive will continue discussions with academics around their vision for TAFE and the public vocational education and training sector, including the position of TAFE and the public vocational education and training, following issues raised by the Bradley Review. This may include issues around the promotion of TAFE, and the branding of qualifications.

National TAFE Council Executive will consider this matter during 2009, so the matter can be considered at NTC AGM in 2010.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

10. The consultation announced by the Federal Government in December 2008 for a Charter of Rights for Australia provides a significant opportunity for unions and their members to pursue and advance the case for rights reflecting the Universal Declaration in relation to education and work.
  - 10.1 The AEU will engage in the consultation process and prepare a submission. Branches and Associated Bodies are encouraged to participate.
  - 10.2 The AEU will work with the ACTU to advance matters in the consultation around economic, social and cultural rights.

11. That this National TAFE Council AGM use the experience of members of the AEU NT Vocational Education and Training sector as a Case Study in what the National Reform Agenda has done in eroding working conditions, salaries, staff retention and student outcomes in the Northern Territory.
12. This NTC AGM condemns the secrecy and lack of consultation surrounding the 2008 Department of Immigration and Citizenship Review of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP).

This AGM demands the immediate release of the Report and following this there should be both immediate and ongoing consultation with representatives of the Union and DIAC about the proposed changes to the delivery of the AMEP.

13. That this NTC AGM commits to pressuring Federal and State Governments to reaffirm and implement policies that support affirmative action programs for women and social inclusion programs for marginalised learners.

It is the responsibility of Governments to ensure that these and all social inclusion programs are maintained in TAFE and the public vocational education and training system.

14. The 2009 National TAFE Council AGM note that once again the Federal Labor Government has not seen fit to provide a speaker at this peak body of the Union representing TAFE education staff around Australia. This follows from a failure to provide a speaker at the 2007 and 2008 AGMs.
15. This 2009 National TAFE Council AGM recognises and thanks James Hamilton for his contribution to the TAFE sector of the AEU.