



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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**EMBARGOED 6.00am
30 September 2004**

Wasteful Technical Colleges to cost Australian taxpayers almost ten times as much as TAFE

"Howard's wasteful Technical College proposal would cost the Australian taxpayer almost ten times as much money per student as it costs in TAFE," said Pat Forward, Federal TAFE Secretary.

"According to the Government's own figures, the 24 colleges would provide training for 7,200 students at a total cost of \$147m in their first full year of operation. This works out at a cost per student of \$20,444," she said

By contrast, figures from the NCVER financial data establish a total average cost per student in TAFE of \$2,235. This cost includes capital.

Ms Forward said: "Howard's Technical College proposal is a ham-fisted attempt to bypass the public TAFE system. It arises from the Federal Government's inability to establish positive and productive relationships with the state governments."

"The emerging crisis in the Australian economy over the provision of skilled labour for the future requires a cooperative approach by all levels of government and Australian industry. Howard's dangerous and costly Technical College proposal is an insult to those industries crying out for serious engagement with the issues," said Ms Forward.

Last year, ABS data showed that more than 40,000 students were turned away from TAFE. The TAFE system could have found places for these students if the Federal Government had reversed its policy of under-funding the TAFE system, and provided an additional \$90m. Instead, it has come up with a risky scheme which will provide 7,200 places in several years time at a cost to the community of \$147m.

For further information, please contact:

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